J. Hardman.

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THE MINOR FESTIVALS

OF

THE ANGLICAN CALENDAR

The Minor Festivals

of the

Anglican Calendar

BY

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MUCH SYMPATHY AND ENCOURAGEMENT

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THEIRS is the steadfast faith of Saints,
And hope that never yields nor faints,
And love of Christ in perfect glow
That lays the prince of this world low.

In them the Father's glory shone,
In them the Will of God the Son,
In them exults the Holy Ghost,
Through them rejoice the heavenly Host.

(*Hymn of* S. Ambrose.)

Introduction

READERS of those portions of the Book of Common Prayer not recited in public worship often encounter names in the Calendar which, to say the least, require further explanation. They discover names which they have heard before and also names of which they know literally nothing. Who are these? Why are these names here? Were they accidentally overlooked or definitely inserted? Are they a mark of haste which needs revision, or are they obsolete and needing removal, or are they possibly an aid to devotion?

In the pages which follow it is intended to attempt some answer to these questions.

I.—*The Origin of Saints' Days.*

The observance of saints' days grew in the simplest, most natural way. Just as every family has its calendar of days marked by the departure of its loved and revered, so the Church of a city or of a land inevitably kept the anniversary of the death or the martyrdom of its noblest sons. Each year, as the day came round, men would remind one another of the saint departed; they would

read some record of his life or sufferings; they would keep the day with thanksgiving and devotion, and encourage one another by the example of noble deeds.

This natural reverence may be seen in process in Africa as early as A.D. 250. S. Cyprian while an exile wrote to the clergy of Carthage, bidding them note carefully the days upon which their brother Christians, then in prison, should suffer martyrdom, in order that the Church might yearly commemorate their sufferings and strengthen itself by the example of their fortitude.

In this simple, natural way the local Calendars grew. They were the outcome of local veneration rather than the act of central authority. They were very numerous as time went on, and of course differed considerably in different places. The Eastern Calendars differed widely from those of the West; and differences existed between the Calendars of each country, even of each city. Some saints mentioned never rose above a local recollection, as was the case with many in Cornwall and in Wales; others were raised to universal esteem. Then, again, as the centuries advanced, the names of saintly men and women accumulated so that many would be enrolled for recollection on the same day. The vast library of volumes known as The Acts of the Saints gives only a portion of the hagiology of the Church in the West; that of the East would be probably far more extensive still.

Hence the necessity arose for selection. Some might be generally remembered by name, others must be omitted, or rather included in the general festival of All the Saints.

In our own country the minor saints' days before the Reformation had become disproportionate and excessive.

We propose to give a sketch of their history from that period onward.

II.—*The Revision of the Calendar.*

In 1536 Henry VIII., with approval of Convocation, passed an Act abrogating certain holy days on the ground that the number had grown so excessive as to become "the occasion of much sloth and idleness, the very nourish of theves, vagaboundes, and of dyvers other unthriftynesses and inconvenyences,"[1] interfering with ingathering of harvest and the regular pursuit of trade. It was accordingly enacted that (*a*) the feast of the dedication of a church should be observed throughout the realm on one day—the first Sunday of October; and (*b*) that the patronal festival should not be a general holiday; and (*c*) that on all festivals occurring during harvest-time—*i.e.* from July 1 to Sept. 29—work was not to be suspended except on feasts of the Apostles, of our Blessed Lady, and of S. George, excepting also the feasts wherein the Judges at Westminster Hall suspended their courts—all which should be kept holy and solemn by every man, as in time past had been accustomed. "Provyded always that it may be lawfull unto all preests and clerkes, as well secular as regular, in the foresayd holy dayes now abrogate, to synge or saye their accustomed servyce for these holy dayes in their churches; so that they do not the same solemnnely, nor do rynge to the same after the manner used in hygh holy dayes, nor do commande or insist the same to be kepte or observed as holy dayes."[2]

By this Act the saints' days were curtailed as days of

[1] Wilkins, "Concilia," iii. 823. [2] Ibid., 824.

obligation and public holidays, while they were not interfered with as voluntary days of devotion. The clergy were expressly left at liberty to observe them, while forbidden to enforce them upon the people; and this not on religious, but on social grounds, the number of holidays being regarded as excessive. We have here the influence of the statesman, not the theologian.

One of the strangest acts in diminishing the saints' days was the proceeding of Henry VIII. against S. Thomas à Becket.[1] The Privy Council at the king's instigation resolved that the saint should be summoned before them to answer for his behaviour to the royal power. The document citing him ran in terms such as the following: "Henry, by the grace of God King of England, France, and Ireland, defender of the faith, supreme head of the English Church. By these presents we cite and summon you, Thomas, formerly Archbishop of Canterbury, to account for the cause of your death and of the wrongs committed by you against the kings our predecessors, and for your arrogant assumption of the name of martyr.

"And because your offences were committed against the Royal Majesty which we hold this day, we cite you to hear sentence, and if none appear on your behalf to be judicially proceeded against as the laws of our kingdom direct and order—

"Given at London, Ap. 24, 1538."

This extraordinary document was served on the late S. Thomas by the Apparitor-General at the shrine. Thirty days were allowed for the saint to appear either in person or by proxy; at the end of which time, no one having

[1] Wilkins, "Concilia," iii. 835. Dec. xxix. in Rom. Calendar.

undertaken his defence, S. Thomas was declared contumacious, and henceforth neither to be regarded as a saint nor a martyr, his shrine to be demolished, his bones to be burnt, his jewels confiscated by the Crown, and his name erased from the Calendar.

In 1542 Convocation determined "that the names and memories of all saints which be not mentioned in the Scripture *or authentical doctors* should be abolished and put out of the same books and Calendars."

We find here the Calendar regarded not from the political but from the religious point of view.

This is a very different ground from that taken six years before. It is the reforming spirit which here makes itself felt, and yet in a very modified form, for appeal is not only made to Scripture, but also to authentical doctors. If these lines had been followed, a large number of the saints' days would have remained in 1549; but the rapid changes of the seven intervening years resulted in their entire exclusion from the first Prayer-book of Edward VI. The second Prayer-book saw the admission of four minor days —S. George, Lammas, S. Lawrence, S. Clement—for what reason admitted is by no means clear. Elizabeth's Prayer-book repeated these four in 1559. The following year saw the Latin Prayer-book containing a saint for nearly every day; and 1561 saw the introduction of our present list, excepting three (Ven. Bede, S. Alban, and Evurtius), of whom the third was added in 1604[1] and the two others in 1662.[2]

After the New Calendar of 1561 the Puritans compiled a Calendar of their own, intended, it is thought, rather as supplementary to than as a substitute for that of the

[1] Hampton Court Conference. [2] Savoy.

Church.[1] It was printed in 1578 under each month of the Church Calendar. Its contents are most curious, as the following selections may show :—

Jan. 1.—Noah in the Ark began to see the tops of the high mountains.

Jan. 17.—The good prince Scanderbeg, King of Epirus, a scourge to the Turks, upon this day died, 1466.

Jan. 22.—The Duke of Somerset was beheaded, 1552.

Feb. 16.—The birth of Philip Melancthon, 1497.

Feb. 22.—Translation of the body of Martin Luther to Wittenberg.

Feb. 25.—Noah sent the dove out of the Ark the third time.

March 24.—Christ held the Last Supper.

July 8.—Nativity of John Hus, 1415.

July 15.—The great sweat began in England, 1551.

Aug. 1.—Aaron died on Mount Hor.

Aug. 27.—Religion was reformed in Geneva, 1535.

Sept. 2.—Augustus Cæsar overthrew Anthony and Cleopatra.

Sept. 7.—Birth of Christianity.

Sept. 14.—Death of S. Chrysostom.

The black-letter days were not allowed to rest in the Calendar without attempts to effect their removal. In 1641 the Committee appointed by the House of Lords has among other subjects the following to be considered : "Whether the names of some departed saints and others should not be quite expunged in the Calendar."[2] At the Savoy Conference (1661) the Puritans, while objecting to saints' days in general, proposed "that the names of all

[1] "Eliz. Liturgies," Parker Soc. [2] Cardwell, "Conferences," 274.

others now inserted in the Calendar which are not in the first and second books of Edward the Sixth may be left out." [1] This would have abolished the entire list of black-letter days. The reply of the bishops was that "the other names are left in the Calendar, not that they should be "kept as holy days, but they are useful for the preservation of their memories, and for other reasons, as for leases, law-days, etc." [2]

III.—*The Principles which governed the Restoration of the Minor Days in* 1561.

A book published by the Church Association [3] seems to inform us that they were retained *for secular reasons only*. In proof is quoted from the "Preces Privatæ of Elizabeth," A.D. 1573, the following:—

"We have not done it [*i.e.* placed their names in the Calendar] because we hold them all for saints, of whom we do not esteem some to be even among the good . . . but that they may be as notes and marks of certain things, the time of which it is very important to know, and ignorance of which may be a disadvantage to our countrymen." [4]

But when we verify the quotation we find that it does not refer to the Prayer-book Calendar at all, but to a Calendar in the "Preces Privatæ," which gives a saint for nearly every day in the year, even including S. Thomas of Canterbury, notwithstanding Henry VIII.'s attack upon him. It does not follow, nor does it appear, that those who appended these words to the enlarged Latin Calendar would

[1] Cardwell, "Conferences," 306. [2] Ibid., 341.
[3] Tomlinson, p. 7. See also Stephens. [4] "Preces Priv. Eliz.," p. 428.

have applied them to the brief list of the Prayer-book of 1561. What the certain things were which required the retention of bad men's names in the Calendar this ambiguous statement does not say, but we cannot transfer the remark from a list of some three hundred where it is placed, and apply it to a selected list of sixty-six to which its author did not apply it.

Wheatley, who would scarcely be charged, even by the Church Association, with Romanizing tendencies, takes a broader line. He could not explain their retention on secular reasons only. According to him, black-letter days were retained (1) partly for the use of lawyers; (2) partly for the use of tradesmen; (3) partly for the dedications of churches, and the use of wakes and fairs; (4) partly for antiquarian reasons.

One out of the four reasons is partly religious. It is, at any rate, something that one object in the mind of Archbishop Parker in revising the Prayer-book was partly religious.

Others, while acknowledging that secular motives did partly prevail, point out that there are days commemorated in the Calendar which fall under none of these four heads. They are neither useful for lawyers as such, nor for tradesmen, nor for wakes and fairs, nor are they purely antiquarian. It cannot be safely said that Archbishop Parker did not esteem them among the good. But they certainly do come under the heading: "Ignorance about them may be a disadvantage to our countrymen."

So we come to a truer explanation. "It seems to have been felt," says Blunt, "by persons in authority, that

greater reverence ought to be shown for the names of those who had glorified God in a special manner by their death or their lives, and in the Latin Calendar of 1560 nearly every day in the year was marked by the name of a saint." [1]

Hook [2] adds that this Latin Calendar "was probably intended as a feeler." It was the archbishop's aim to pave the way for the introduction of a larger list of minor saints' days into the English Prayer-book.

We are lifted into a higher region by Bishop Cosin.

"The Calendar of the Church is as full of benefit as delight unto such as are given to the due study and contemplation thereof. . . .

"This faith of ours being no other than the very same . . . which . . . the noble army of martyrs and the goodly fellowship of other God's Saints and servants, men famous in their generations before us, have some maintained with the sanctity of their lives, and some sealed with the innocency of their deaths; it is for this cause that the names of these holy and heavenly saints are still preserved in the Calendar of the Church, there to remain upon record and register (as of old time they did), where they might also stand as sacred memorials of God's mercy towards us, as forcible witnesses of His ancient truth, as confirmations of the faith which we now profess to be the same that theirs then was, as provocations to the piety which they then practised, and as everlasting records to show Whose blessed servants they were on earth, that are now like the angels of God in heaven." [3]

[1] Blunt, "Annotated Prayer-book." [2] "Lives of the Archbishops."
[3] Bishop Cosin, "Devotions," Works, vol. ii. p. 96.

Bishop Cosin adds that the immense multitude of saintly workers necessitated their general inclusion upon one day —that of All Saints—but that the English bishops wisely retained "some few selected days in every month for the special memory of others, both holy Persons and holy Actions, which they observed not our people alone, but the Universal Church of Christ also, to be most affected unto and best acquainted withal."[1]

It would be difficult to find a nobler account of the motives which led to the restoration of the minor days. That this is the true account is shown by the number of Doctors and Teachers of the Church whom the Calendar contains, and again by the fact that three festivals restored were those of the Blessed Virgin Mary—the Conception, the Nativity, and the Visitation.

IV.—*The Contents of the Calendar.*

If we analyze the contents of the Calendar, there are sixty-six black-letter days in all.

They range over the period from S. John Baptist to S. Richard of Chichester (died 1253). They are of a wide geographical distribution. Fourteen are names of women, fifty-two of men. They represent numerous classes and vocations.

Four are popes—S. Fabian, S. Gregory, S. Clement, S. Silvester.

Six are archbishops—S. David, S. Alphege, S. Dunstan, S. Augustine, S. Boniface, S. Cyprian.

Eighteen are bishops—S. Hilary, S. Blasius, S. Valentine, S. Chad, S. Richard, S. Ambrose, S. Martin (2), S. Swithun,

[1] Bishop Cosin, "Devotions," Works, vol. ii. p. 96. 1627 A.D.

S. Augustine, S. Evurtius, S. Lambert, S. Remigius, S. Denys, S. Britius, S. Machutus, S. Hugh, S. Nicolas.

Four are priests—S. Lucian, Venerable Bede, S. Nicomede, S. Crispin.

Two are deacons—S. Vincent, S. Lawrence.

Four are monks—S. Benedict, S. Giles, S. Jerome, S. Leonard.

Six are laymen soldiers or kings—S. Alban and S. George, S. Edward King of the West Saxons (2), S. Edward the Confessor, S. Edmund.

Nine are virgins — S. Prisca, S. Agnes, S. Agatha, S. Margaret, S. Faith, S. Etheldreda, S. Cecilia, S. Catherine, S. Lucy.

Two are married women — S. Perpetua, S. Anne.

Four are connected with events in Church history—Holy Cross (2), S. John at the Latin Gate, Lammas.

Four commemorate events in Holy Scripture—S. John Baptist, S. Mary Magdalene, Transfiguration, and Name of Jesus.

Three are festivals of the Blessed Virgin—the Conception, the Nativity, and the Visitation.

Viewing the Calendar as a whole, the impression produced will perhaps be that, while there is much to be thankful for, there is much to be desired. There are insertions not easy to understand and omissions much to be lamented. There are names which are names and nothing more, saints of whom history is silent, if legend is profuse. There are some of whom we hardly know for certain even when they lived. There are names omitted which we might well rejoice to find within the list of men whom the English Church delights to honour.

V.—*The Observance of Minor Days.*

They were undoubtedly observed for a long time in the local fairs and in the law courts; but their religious observance is not so easy to trace. When the red-letter days were scarcely noticed still less attention would be paid to others. And the fact that they were days of devotion, not of obligation, would make their observance more individual, local, and less conspicuous. And it is always hard to know how far an undercurrent of private devotional observance continues through periods of outward neglect and indifference. Bishop Cosin certainly did his best to encourage their observance by the short explanatory notes in the Calendar to his "Devotions," although he elsewhere stumbles over S. Dunstan with the depreciatory remark, "After his death he was sainted, but God knows why." [1]

But even some of the later devotional books intended to promote better observance of the Prayer-book ignore the existence of black-letter days. Nelson, *e.g.*, in the preface to his "Fasts and Festivals," asks, "What means so proper to perfect our natures as to set before ourselves the example of Primitive Saints?" Yet his pages do not refer to one post-Apostolic example. Wheatley gives an account, but its value may be judged from the fact that he calls them "Romish saints' days," and says that he inserts them to "gratify curiosity." Mant and others followed Wheatley, who seems regarded as the standard authority on the subject; and it is only quite in recent times that anything like a reverent or devotional treatment of them

[1] Works, vol. v. p. 31.

seems to have occurred to Anglican writers. One of the best helps is the anonymous "Justorum Semita," now out of print, which gives a useful devotional biography of each saint, and there are Neale's "Sermons on the Minor Days." Of course, the notes in the Prayer-book Interleaved and the Annotated Prayer-book give useful material, but the literature is small.

The Restorers of 1561 failed to impress the minor days on the reverence of the Church. And to this may be partly ascribed the loss of belief in the historic continuity of the Church. The Calendar is a compendium of the Church's history, and where the popular mind is informed of no saints but those in Scripture, it does look as if saints, like miracles, were the brilliant occasional accompaniments of a new Revelation, not the frequent witnesses to the Spirit's power. And the absence of any reference to Catholic example is very serious.

Here, then, in the pages of the Calendar, more or less unobserved, yet ever present, the saintly names have stood silent witnesses to the fact of continuity, waiting for the day when faith should revive, and desire to know more of the Catholic past and its purest examples should at length reawaken. May we not venture to say that, in the rekindling spiritual life of this age, the time has come to avail ourselves of the means so long provided, and to make the Calendar a useful instrument in the dissemination of Catholic teaching? Valuable, indeed, is the instruction, whether historic, moral, doctrinal, or spiritual, which may be conveyed through the medium of the saintly names commemorated there.

January 8

S. Lucian

SOME hundred miles to the north of Antioch lies the Syrian town of Samosata, through which the Euphrates flows. It was the birthplace of the heretic Paulus and of the Martyr Lucian. The date of Lucian's birth is unknown, but he died in 311. He was born of Christian parents, who began to train him carefully from his early days in the holy Faith and in the love of God. But Lucian had the misfortune to lose both father and mother by the time he was twelve years old. As a youth he applied himself to the study of Holy Scripture under the ascetic Macarius of Edessa. From the time of his Baptism he longed for monastic ideals, and lived in the austerest way. So great was his love of Holy Scripture that he spent his time in almost unbroken meditation, grudging and reducing to the lowest limits the hours inevitably bestowed on sleep. He was also very learned in the literature of the Gentile world. When a man of mature age, disciplined by long-protracted study and self-denial, he came to Antioch, the city by whose name he is generally known; and there he was ordained as priest, became one of the greatest Biblical scholars of his age, and head of the theological school.

Lucian seems to have been a better critic than a theologian; his immense Biblical learning did not keep him clear from heresy.

The history of the Church is a continual reminder that learning and ability are by no means safeguards in themselves against error: the wise may wander when the untutored stand firm, and it is quite possible to be a learned student of the Bible and yet an indifferent theologian. If the student is to avoid this fate he must follow in the lines of the Church's guidance. It is certainly very unexpected, strange, and pathetic, that one now venerated as a saint and martyr of the Church should have spent years either voluntarily separated or forcibly excluded from her Communion. Yet it seems that this was the case. But if on the one side it is melancholy, on the other it is hopeful; for the heretic of the present moment may nevertheless some day return to the Church's fold, and be numbered among her most victorious and her best.

It may be that Lucian never was a heretic at heart, but that while opposing one heresy he fell unintentionally into another. The prevailing heretical opinion at Antioch in Lucian's day was that commonly known as Sabellian. According to this theory, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit were but names given at different times to the One Divine Person, who appeared in successive periods as Father and then as Son. Thus the Unity of God was maintained by confounding the Persons. Lucian, in opposition to this, taught most rightly that the names are not mere names, without corresponding realities, but that each represents a distinct person.[1]

But the moment the Sabellian, or believer in One Divine Person, came to the question, In what relation does that One Divine Person stand to Jesus Christ? he was

[1] See Socrates, ii. 10.

obviously in difficulties. Some taught that the One Divine Person became incarnate in Jesus Christ. This was easily refuted from the Scripture, which, while it plainly taught that Jesus Christ was a Divine Person, distinguished no less plainly between Him and the Father. In the attempt to assert the distinct personality of Jesus Christ, it was easy to speak more of His distinction of person than of His identity of nature, and so to encourage others in the heresy afterwards called the Arian.

The error which Lucian answered was that which identified the Father and the Son. But while he meant to show Their distinctness, he separated Them unduly. He urged the distinction of person: he failed to urge the identity of nature. This may well be taken to heart in other controversies. The Catholic truth lies between the two extremes. Lucian's mistake may serve as a reminder that it is easy for good men in their recoil from one error to fall into its opposite.

It would seem that during three successive episcopates at Antioch, Lucian remained outside the Communion of the Church. After this, however, he returned to the Church, and was reconciled, and spent the last ten years or more of his life within its Communion. From that time forward he seems to have confined himself to the studies most suited to his gifts—namely, the texts and versions of the Bible. His greatest achievement in learning was a revised version of the Septuagint, or Greek translation of the Hebrew Scriptures. This laborious undertaking was widely known throughout the Church, and was strongly commended after Lucian's death by scholars of the eminence of S. Jerome.

Lucian was reserved for one last conflict with the

powers of error. In the Baptism of Blood, he certainly atoned for past heresies and sealed his own faith. It was the time of the tyrant Galerius,[1] fierce persecutor of the Church, who, after six years' relentless cruelty, found himself dying of a terrible disease, cancelled his edicts, and asked the Church to pray for him. Galerius had not come yet to ask the Church's prayers. He was first to be the persecutor of Lucian. The learned student of the Bible was prudent and discreet, and avoided what he knew not if he could endure. But he was betrayed to the pagan power, one of the priests of that heresy which Lucian had vehemently opposed being his betrayer—a fact which shows significantly what the Sabellian heresy thought of Lucian.

Lucian and his persecutor met face to face. The priest was offered liberty on the sole condition that he would eat food which had been offered in sacrifice to idols. Lucian refused, and made in the Emperor's hearing an apology for the Faith which, like many apologies under similar circumstances, might silence yet not convince. The actual tenor of Lucian's apology, perhaps the very words, have been preserved for our admiration to the present day.

"It is no secret," said Lucian, "that He Whom we Christians worship is one God, declared to us through Christ, and breathed into our hearts through the Holy Spirit. For we are not, as you suppose, held in the delusions of some human superstition; nor are we, like some, misled by a tradition unreflectingly received from our fathers. Our teacher concerning God is none other

[1] Died 311.

than God Himself. That lofty Majesty cannot sink into the senses of the human mind unless it be either brought down by the power of His Spirit or revealed by the interpretation of His Word and His Wisdom. I confess that we ourselves have sometimes erred, and imagined the images which our hands had fashioned as gods and makers of heaven and earth—an opinion which was refuted by the fact that all the sanctity which their fragile forms possessed was bestowed on them by us. For they merited just so much admiration as the beauty deserved which their makers bestowed upon them.

"But He, the Almighty God, Whom our hands could not fashion, but Whose creation are we ourselves, pitying these human errors, sent His Wisdom into this world, robed in flesh, to teach us that God, Who made both heaven and earth, is not to be found in things made with hands, but in the eternal and invisible. He gave us the laws of life and the rules of self-discipline, to observe frugality, to rejoice in poverty, to cultivate sweet gentleness, to be eager for peace, to embrace purity of heart, to keep a patient spirit. Moreover, as for all those things which you now work against us, He foretold us that they would come; that we should be brought before kings, and be arraigned before the tribunals of magistrates, and be led as victims to the slaughter. Hence, too, it is that He, being Himself immortal, the Word and Wisdom of God, gave Himself to death in order that He might afford to us in our human nature the example of His patience. Nor did He frustrate our hopes by His death, but rose again for us on the third day; not as those Acts of Pilate falsely say, but, being harmless and undefiled and

pure, He endured death for this cause expressly that He might conquer it by rising again.

"These things of which I speak, were not done in a corner, nor are they destitute of witnesses. Almost the greater portion of the world already assents to the truth of this—entire cities believe it; and if some still hesitate, the country folk, with their open-hearted nature, bear witness to it. If belief has been somewhat scanty, hitherto let me add the evidence of the places where these things were done. Jerusalem itself attests it; so does the rock at Golgotha, broken beneath the burden of the Cross; so does the cave which, when the gates of hell were opened wide, gave back the Body restored to life again, that it might be borne thence glorified into Heaven. And if these seem less deserving credit because they occurred on earth, accept also a faithful witness in the heavens. I bring the sun itself as a witness to you of these verities; for when he saw these things done by evil men on earth, he withdrew, and hid his noontide glory in the heavens. Examine your public records; you will find that in the time of Pilate, when Christ suffered, the sun was hidden, and darkness stopped the course of day. And if you give no faith to the earth, to the heavens, to the blood of those from whom you strive by torture to elicit truth, how shall you put any faith in my words and my assertions?"[1]

The trial ended in Lucian's condemnation. He was thrown into prison. There, first of all, they tormented him with hunger; that cruel form of suffering under which all sense of humanity has at times been lost. They starved him, and then placed idol-offerings on a table beside him,

[1] Routh, "Reliquiæ Sacræ," vol. iv. pp. 5–7.

in order that the craving and gnawing of natural want might force him, against his convictions, to partake. But Lucian suffered agony rather than yield. His captors tried this form of temptation in vain.

The will which could not be broken by allurement was then tried by other tortures. They stretched him upon the rack, while his body rested on a bed of sharp points. They cross-examined him. To all questions Lucian gave but one reply: and that reply, I am a Christian. Of what country are you? I am a Christian. What is your calling? I am a Christian. Who are your parents? Still he answered, I am a Christian. With that one simple answer, says S. Chrysostom, he wounded the head of the Evil One. Deeply versed in the teaching and literature of Greece, he knew well that in conflicts such as his there is no need of eloquence, but of faith, and that victory is awarded not to power of speech but to a heart inflamed with the love of God. One word was enough to put the hosts of ill to flight! Behold the Martyr's wisdom. He who says I am a Christian says at once his country, his family, his profession, and all things else. Do you ask how this can be? Let me tell you. A Christian has no city upon the earth; his city is Jerusalem above. For, says the Apostle, "Jerusalem which is above is free, which is the mother of us all."[1] A Christian has no permanence upon the earth; he belongs to the heavenly city. "Our citizenship," says the Apostle, "is in heaven."[2] A Christian has for his relatives and companions all the saints, for we are fellow-citizens of the saints and of the household of God.[3] So that in a single word Lucian had most truly answered both

[1] Gal. iv. 26. [2] Phil. iii. 20. [3] Eph. ii. 19.

who he was, and whence he sprung, and what was his profession.[1]

The memory of Lucian has had a twofold fate. On the one hand it *lived on in the Church* and was venerated, his calamitous error being forgiven and forgotten in virtue of his subsequent reconciliation, his valuable and laborious work as the reviser of the Bible, his exemplary devotional life, crowned at last by brave confession and martyr's death. Towards the close of the century in which he died Chrysostom pronounced a splendid panegyric over him in the city where he had laboured.

On the other hand, *heresy delighted to claim him* for its own. The very fact that the Church now rejoiced in him as a martyred saint made him all the more effective as a support for heresy. To be able to identify itself with one whom the Church honoured and revered was of course a valuable gain to heresy.

Yet clearly it is not heresy, it is the Church, which has estimated Lucian in a way at once most reasonable and most just; for if the pupils remained in error, it was because they did not follow their master into the Faith. Lucian recognized his error and returned. That is a witness to sincerity and humility. It could have been no easy thing for the teacher of many distinguished pupils, the head of the great theological school in so famous a city, to acknowledge that his leading had been misleading, and to set the example of lowly minded return into the fold from which many less gifted than himself had never strayed.

[1] S. J. Chrysostom, in S. Luciani "Martyrium," Works, vol. ii. p. 631.

January 13

S. Hilary

IN Poitiers, or near, in the land of Aquitaine, and about the year of Grace 300, was born, to a wealthy pagan household, the future Bishop Hilary. His singular intellectual power was ripened by an excellent education, and a modern estimate does not hesitate to call him "by far the deepest thinker of the West."[1] This, of course, refers to his matured reflection on the Christian Faith. His earlier life was that of a man of high position, probably a magistrate in Gaul. Hilary's conversion to Christianity came in mature life, after profound study in philosophy, in which his clear and original mind was unable to secure a lasting rest. The causes of his conversion were not, as in Augustine's case, largely moral, but chiefly intellectual. His own analysis of the process of his conversion is deeply interesting.[2] Reflecting on the purpose of human existence and the right use of its powers, he strove to learn what might be gathered alike from the natural world and from human thought. The ideal of self-gratification rose before him—leisure combined with wealth—the force of which his nature felt while his nobler self repudiated,

[1] Gwatkin, "Arian Controv.," p. 84. [2] "De Trin.," bk. i.

as lowering man to the level of the unreasoning animal world. Life must be meant for something nobler; man's capacity for progress must have a meaning, and in itself suggested the tremendous thought of immortality. Life was most certainly a gift, and the energy of his mind pressed on to discover the Giver. The popular systems of the day pronounced the name of God either to deny His existence altogether, or at best to represent Him in a form which the moral sense repudiated. But although distracted amid conflicting, unsatisfying claims, Hilary's mind as a pagan held firmly to the fundamental principles of Theism, namely, that God exists. The existence of God is to Hilary a necessity of the reason, a demand of the conscience,[1] and written on the skies, although a conviction which may be, and too often is, obscured by human sinfulness.

God then exists—from that the thinker commences.

God can have no superior. Reason demands that eternity be His inalienable possession. Under influence of thoughts like these, Hilary was attracted to the Hebrew traditions where God is described as "I am"—the Self-existent. "I confess that I was amazed to find in them an indication concerning God so exact, expressing, in terms best adapted to human understanding, the mystery of the nature of God." Founding himself on the fact of the Divine eternity, Hilary advanced to the fact of His omnipotence—God holding all things enclosed within His grasp, separate from the world, yet dwelling within it. "In devout thoughts such as these my soul, engrossed in the pursuit of truth, took its delight." What secured Hilary within the bounds of truth during these speculations was his

[1] See on Ps. vii. 2 and cxxii. 2, 4.

profound consciousness of man's narrow limits. "It seemed that the greatness of God so far surpassed the mental powers of His handiwork, that however far the limited mind of man might strain in the hazardous effort to define Him, the gap was not lessened between the finite nature which struggled and the boundless infinity that lay beyond its ken." But, at any rate, God, if in Himself transcending human comprehension, might be partly revealed in His works. If the Creator of greatness is supreme in grandeur, the Creator of beauty must Himself be supremely beautiful.

Of course, here again the beauty of nature could only faintly suggest and shadow a splendour of Divine glory which overtaxes the human mind's best powers. Hilary's thought is the same, expressed in the words, "What then must Thou be like, Eternal Loveliness!"

But the great enigma for Hilary, as for other thinkers unaided by Christian revelation, was the problem of immortality. While unaided reason pleaded that annihilation would leave faith unrewarded and aspirations unachieved, and seemed an unworthy issue to an existence so divinely gifted—an existence in which man already held some share of the thought and wisdom of God, yet these pleadings, when confronted by the facts of dissolution, faltered and failed; and the hope that the soul would survive the apparent wreck of all individuality was expelled by fear. Then it was that the language of Revelation given in the opening passage of S. John's Gospel came to the support of exiled and half-perishing hope. "In the beginning was the Word; and the Word was with God, and the Word was God."

These mighty sentences have exercised a marvellous influence over some of the most highly gifted human beings. They have come with a persuasiveness which, however men attempt to explain, they cannot possibly deny. From the days when a pagan philosopher declared that these words deserve to be written in letters of gold over the temple of humanity, down to the present time, their influence is one of the facts with which the religious historian has to deal, and for which only the believer in Revelation has the key. "Herein," says Hilary, "my soul, troubled and distressed, found a hope wider than it had imagined." But the central fact which persuaded and convinced and overcame him was the revelation of God as Father. God was no longer seen in isolated, self-sufficient grandeur; He was revealed in all the tender, winning characteristics of fatherhood and love. That, to Hilary's mind, altered everything. The truth that flowed out from it, the self-investiture of a divine Person in human nature, the eternal hopes of man, his immortality—all these came as natural, inevitable sequences to the first and supreme fact that God was a Father. And this truth of the Divine Fatherhood was seized by Hilary and appropriated and rejoiced in and proclaimed with a power and a charm and an adoring delight certainly surpassed by none if equalled by any from the days of S. John to his own. That light from the fourth Evangelist was the illuminating power which led to Hilary's conversion. Of course the keen intellect of Hilary saw well enough that mysteries—deep, unfathomable mysteries—remained. But here again his sense of finite incapacity was his protection. He felt most keenly how high these truths are above the mental vision of man.

But, as he says, the mighty workings of God, wrought on the scale of eternal omnipotence, are to be measured, not by man's own power of perception, but by a boundless faith. Hilary refused to regard powerlessness to comprehend as a justification for unbelief. He had in view the truth that the power to comprehend follows after the will to believe.

Hilary's conversion was on its human side the outcome rather of independent study than of intercourse with Christian teachers. No great preacher of the age stood to Hilary as Ambrose to Augustine.

Hilary's intellectual power was henceforth devoted to the advancement of the Faith. His dialectical training was invaluable, his pagan learning consecrated. Augustine said of him that, like the Israelites, he issued from Egypt laden with its spoils.[1]

One of Hilary's earliest works is his Commentary on S. Matthew. Commentaries on the New Testament now form a vast library. Any new work of this description now follows in the wake of almost innumerable predecessors. But Hilary was perhaps the very first to write a consecutive exposition of a New Testament book.

The date and the circumstances of Hilary's consecration to the bishopric of Poitiers are alike uncertain. But it took place probably about A.D. 350. The current of secular affairs determined the general direction of the Bishop's controversial labours. Constantius, who to the Empire of the East added in 353 that of the West, was—perhaps partly from policy and it may be from conviction—an opponent of the Catholics and an advocate or protector

[1] S. Augustine, "De Doctrina Christiana," ii. 60, 61.

of the Arians. Being at Milan in 355, the Emperor extorted from a council a condemnation of Athanasius, not on the ground of his faith, but for misconduct, the proof of which rested merely on the Emperor's assertion. Doubtless Constantius aimed indirectly at the Faith through Athanasius' person.[1] The Emperor could not possibly have secured a denial of the Faith itself in the bishoprics of the West. Hilary saw through the imperial intentions, and wrote a severe letter of protest to Constantius.

Thus Hilary, defending Athanasius, came under Constantius' displeasure. Constantius was far too prudent to proceed against Hilary on grounds of faith. But he had the Bishop accused before a Gallican synod on the plausible charge of stirring popular discontent. The Gallican bishops, evidently under fear of incurring the imperial ill-will, were cowardly enough to sacrifice the Bishop of Poitiers, and abandoned him to his fate. Constantius accordingly, thus backed up by a time-serving council, sentenced Hilary to exile.

So Hilary, for Athanasius' sake—whom on earth he never saw, or rather for the sake of the Faith of the Church which embraced them both—went forth into exile, with all its inseparable miseries.[2] Four years he wandered in Asia, exchanging the fair province of Aquitaine for the cities of Phrygia. But it is a remarkable witness to Hilary's ascendency that during the long absence no one ventured to occupy his place, and he still governed his diocese from afar, and still ministered through his priests.

Hilary was not so great as Athanasius; yet he was

[1] See Gwatkin, "Arian Controversy," p. 33. [2] A.D. 356–359.

the Athanasius of the West.[1] He reached where Athanasius could not penetrate. He saw as clearly as Athanasius saw that the conflict between the Church and the opponents of our Lord's Divinity was one which involved the very existence of Christianity. It was a question whose issues were in eternity, a fact worth any sacrifice to attest.

More congenial than any other to Hilary in exile was the calm, sententious devotion of the 119th Psalm. It harmonized with, it gave expression to, his own experience. He seems to find in its language of self-abandoning trust the peculiar consolation which his soul required. When he read the words, "Princes have persecuted me without a cause, but my heart standeth in awe of Thy word," Hilary knew, like the Psalmist, what it is to stand in awe of revealed truth, and the man's self comes out in the comment, "If he denies, he fears that he himself will be denied." He fears lest he should either be unworthily overcome by the persecutions of princes or yield to their influence; for it is unpardonable to lose the grace of God out of fear of the world. Those who do not call upon God and fear God, said Hilary, are disposed to be afraid where there is no cause for fear. "Then were they afraid where no fear was."[1] They fear the powers of nature; they fear kings, dead or destined to die; they fear superstitions. It is an irrational and a godless state. Yet, reflected Hilary, how often do we fear the world and its powers, which, after all, can do no more against us than thieves or fevers or shipwrecks can do! For fear of the world we sacrifice the liberty of the Church, the confidence of our

[1] Cf. De Broglie.

[1] Ps. liii. 6.

hope, our faith in God, while we do not fear Him Who is the Avenger of evil, and can destroy both soul and body in hell. We set a momentary gain before an eternal principle; and to secure the favour of time, lose the approval of eternity.[1]

Certainly Hilary sealed this testimony by example. He knew well the unpopularity at Court of the line which he was taking in defence of the Church's Faith. He lost the favour of time, but he secured the approval of eternity.

Hilary's mind during the four years of exile had been maturing the great theological work which is one of the noblest contributions to Christian thought, and his chief claim on the gratitude of Catholics—the work on the Holy Trinity.

Hilary's distinction lies in his defence of the Divinity of Jesus Christ. His merit is definition. His acute comments, his deductions, his comparison of one saying of Christ with another, must have meant protracted and unbroken reflection upon this central doctrine of the Christian Faith. The name of S. Hilary has been partially eclipsed by the work of later and still more distinguished men; but the labour of Hilary has been their guidance, and they have profited largely by his insight.

The birth of the Eternal Son from His Eternal Father is, says Hilary, a mystery transcending all human wisdom and experience. It is a secret confined to the Eternal Two. No human being need wonder if this truth surpasses his comprehension. "Archangels share my ignorance." Worlds do not supply the explanation. Prophets

[1] Works, vol. i. p. 332.

have not perceived it. Apostles have not grasped it. The Son Himself has not revealed it. Inability to realize the generation of the Creator may well be acquiesced in by those who cannot realize the generation even of a creature. Who shall declare His generation? How penetrate the mystery, the deep darkness, which shrouds the origin of the Uncreated Son, a darkness in which you would be alone with God the Unbegotten and God the Only-begotten? "Begin, continue, persevere," exclaims Hilary to the human intellect. "I know that you will not reach the goal, but I shall rejoice at your progress. For he who devoutly treads an endless road, though he reach no conclusion, will profit by his exertions. Reason will fail for want of words, but when it comes to a stand it will be the better for the effort made.[1] Hilary is clear that a true knowledge of the divine Sonship transcends the range of human reason. "Whom shall I entreat? Whom shall I call to my aid? From what books shall I borrow the terms needed to state so hard a problem? Shall I ransack the philosophy of Greece? No! I have read, "Where is the wise? . . . where is the enquirer of this world?"[2] In this matter the world's philosophers, the wise men of paganism are dark, for they have rejected the wisdom of God. Shall I turn to the scribe of the Law? He is in darkness, for the Cross of Christ is an offence to him. "There stands by my side to guide me through the difficulties which I have enumerated a poor fisherman, ignorant, uneducated, fishing-lines in hand, clothes dripping, muddy feet, every inch

[1] "De Trin.," ii. 9, 10. Trans. in Schaff and Wace, Nicene Library.
[2] 1 Cor. i. 20.

a sailor."[1] From his lips S. Hilary hears the golden utterance, "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God." "While unaided human reason was powerless to penetrate this Truth, the fisherman who lay on the bosom of our Lord was taught to proclaim it. We accept with reverence this teaching of the fisherman, and recognize in his words the oracles of God."[2]

Hilary drew forth from Holy Scripture the evidence for the Divinity of our Lord with wonderful power of exposition. Take, for instance, his explanation of S. John xvii. 5, "And now, O Father, glorify Thou Me . . . with the glory which I had with Thee before the world was."

"What is this glory which He asks the Father to bestow upon Him? It is the glory which He had with the Father before Creation. But that glory is the fulness of Deity which was His before creation, and was still possessed by Him at the moment when He was speaking. He was not, therefore, asking God to give Him what He still possessed. But the appeal is in behalf of His humanity. For He Who was from everlasting the Son of God began to be also the Son of Man. For the Word was made flesh. Not that He ceased to be what He was, but began to be what He was not. He did not cease to be Divine, but He began to be human; and being now human, He asks the Father that His human nature might thenceforward share the glory which He, the Divine Personality, had eternally possessed."[3]

On the words, "I have manifested Thy Name unto the

[1] "De Trin.," ii. 13. [2] Ibid., 21.
[3] Hilary, "De Trin.," iii. 35. Migne, § 16.

men which Thou gavest Me out of the world,"[1] S. Hilary says that the Name of God—God as He really is—was in a sense already manifested before Christ came; and yet, in a very real sense, it was not yet manifested, for being essentially in the truth of His nature the Father of His only Son, God is not really known unless His Fatherhood is known.[2]

One of Hilary's most valuable contributions to Christian thought was his explanation of our Lord's Divinity from the self-consciousness of God. "God beholds Himself reflected in the Person of His Son. Either is to other a mirror in which He gazes upon Himself. Before the Father is the perfect Image of the Father, like Himself, Eternal and Divine. Before the Son is the Father, by contemplating Whose thoughts the Son understands Himself. Their mutual love is the means of this mutual introspection."[3]

There are no dramatic incidents in Hilary's career, no thrilling experiences. He was powerful, but he was not popular, and after death he was soon largely eclipsed in general esteem by the all-absorbing interest of such men as Ambrose and Augustine. Yet he is one of the most signal examples of sanctified intellect. "Certainly no finer purpose or more convinced faith, perhaps no keener intellect, has devoted itself to the defence and elucidation of truth than that of Hilary."[4]

Hilary's work is characterized by thorough and earnest loyalty to the lines of the Church's Faith, but within

[1] S. John xvii. 6. [2] "De Trin.," iii. 90.
[3] Cf. Dorner, "Person of Christ," D. i. vol. ii. p. 302.
[4] Introduction by Watson in Wace's edition, p. lvii.

those lines there is a fearless logic, an extraordinary insight, a singular beauty of refinement and reverent-mindedness.[1]

The last six years of his life[2] were spent by S. Hilary quietly in his own episcopal duties at Poitiers—so quietly, indeed, that it is not precisely recorded when the end came or in what way he died. The fact is that he was probably not by nature a man of action, but rather a man of thought. The necessities of his time thrust him into a prominence to which he was naturally averse, and which nothing but a sense of duty would have induced him to endure. He was not the energetic organizer, but rather the retired and studious theologian, a lover of profound thought and devout contemplation.

[1] Introduction by Watson in Wace's edition, p. lix. [2] A.D. 361–367.

January 18

S. Prisca

OF S. Prisca we have no certain knowledge. She is said to have lived and died at Rome, and to have been martyred at the age of thirteen, probably in the year 268. The narrative of her passion is evidently late, and full of purely legendary matters. All that can be said is that her martyrdom is certain. She stands between those saints whose biographies are known to us on earth and those whose names even are not recorded here, but which are known and written in the Lamb's Book of Life.

January 20

S. Fabian

ABOUT 200 years after the Lord's Ascension, Fabian, a Christian layman of Italy, residing somewhere in the country outside Rome, happened to be on a visit to the city when Anteros, the Roman bishop, died. He was one of the crowd who thronged the church to take part in the election of a successor. Of his antecedents nothing is recorded; but it is difficult to suppose that he was not well known and appreciated by the faithful in the Eternal City. What is recorded is that as Fabian stood among the crowd within the church there flew a dove and rested upon his head, just as—it is the analogy drawn by the historian, Eusebius—the Holy Spirit in dove-like form descended at the Baptism of Jesus Christ. The assembled Church with one consent regarded the incident as a clear indication of a higher will than man's, and declared Fabian divinely chosen to the supreme and arduous position. Thus Fabian sat in Peter's place.

The election of S. Fabian is one of those events which men, according to the axioms with which they approach it, will ascribe either to supernatural guidance or to superstitious credulity. The descent of the dove may have

been a perfectly natural event; in any case, there is no antecedent reason why the Higher Will should not have been manifested in such a way. It must be so far a question simply of evidence and of faith. Apart from anything supernatural, the sudden elevation of a layman to the supreme guidance of the Church may appear perilous in the extreme. But in the Early Ages it has several parallels. And here, as in the case of S. Ambrose, it was justified, at any rate, by its success. During fourteen years Fabian governed the Roman believers in such a manner that after his death his own clergy described him as a man of most noble memory, and S. Cyprian praised "the integrity of his administration." That administration Fabian crowned with martyrdom. He became a victim of the Decian persecution in 250.

In the catacomb called the Cemetery of Callixtus, on the Appian Way, was Fabian buried.

"The dismay caused by this blow was very great. His people elected no successor to Fabian when they laid him behind the stone which, still bearing the contemporary record, preserves a slight but certain memorial both of their dejection and of the order-loving spirit of that Church. The name, 'Fabian, Bishop,' is cut deep with rude, firm strokes. Not much later, but after the stone had been placed against the hollow cell, the addition of 'Martyr' has been deeply scratched. Without proper authentication, or in the vacancy of the see, the appellation could not be attached even to so sacred a grave in the catacomb chapel." [1]

An interesting reminiscence of Fabian is recorded, to

[1] Archbishop Benson, "Cyprian," pp. 65, 66.

the effect that he appointed seven sub-deacons at Rome to see that the acts of martyrs were preserved,[1] doubtless with a view to the observance of their Days by the Church. Thus S. Fabian, who is now commemorated in the Calendar, himself promoted the formation of the Calendar.

The Roman Church was unwilling to select another of her noblest sons for a position almost certainly involving speedy martyrdom. For sixteen months, therefore, the city remained without a bishop. During the vacancy the clergy governed the Church and wrote to S. Cyprian of Carthage an account of Fabian's death. Cyprian replied with fervour, declaring that Fabian's martyrdom was not only a glorious end, but the appropriate consummation of his exemplary life and labours.[2] In proportion to the disaster inflicted when a bishop fails in faith is the power and persuasiveness of his example when his faith is firm.

The lessons of Fabian's name are obvious—

He stands prominent as a layman who merited the approval of the entire Church; and as one who, though suddenly raised to the highest responsibilities, discharged them faithfully; and who crowned his services to the Church with martyrdom.

Fabian is one of the four popes commemorated in the English Calendar. The four are: S. Fabian, Jan. 20; S. Gregory, March 12; S. Clement, Nov. 23; S. Silvester, Dec. 31, or in their historical order: S. Clement, S. Fabian, S. Silvester, S. Gregory. This commemoration of popes in the Anglican Calendar has remained a silent protest against a certain controversial tone too frequently adopted

[1] Pearson, "Minor Theological Works," ii. 314.
[2] "S. Cyprian," Letter II.

by men who accept that Calendar. Retention of a name in the Calendar by no means endorses all which its possessor taught or imagined; but it indicates a sense of unity and a desire for fuller realization of that unity; it bids us dwell rather on those matters in which several Churches agree than on those in which they differ. But doubtless the Roman teaching in Fabian's day did not differ from that of the English communion to-day.

S. Fabian's record is of the scantiest kind: a few flashes of light, and that is all. He stands forth suddenly from obscurity in the hour of his consecration; then darkness gathers, and he is seen again, fourteen years later, in his martyrdom. There is a word of praise for him from Africa, a name in the Calendar, and a fragment of the stone which covered his grave. That is all. It is certainly disappointing. These are not the materials for a biography. But it is clear that he was a man of piety and power, and that he won the admiration and reverence of his age, and chiefly of those best qualified to judge. It is to be wished that the details of his life survived. Yet, after all, we know little more than this of some of the Apostles themselves.

January 21

S. Agnes

S. AGNES is one of the youngest of the martyrs. She belonged to a pious family in Rome, and was only a child of twelve or thirteen when she died. Child as she was, the son of the Prefect Symphronius sought to have her promised to him in marriage. When she was refused he fell ill, and the physician ascribed his sickness to his disappointment. The prefect was enraged, and took a cruel revenge. Hearing that Agnes was a Christian, he tore her from her parents, and tried to force her to offer sacrifice, but she only made the sign of the Cross; and when she refused to deny the Faith he condemned her to violent outrage, and at last severed her head from her body with a stroke of the sword. Her martyrdom was at Rome, in the reign of Diocletian, probably in the year 304.

The child-martyr Agnes has won the admiration of many of the most learned and distinguished servants of Jesus Christ. S. Ambrose, Bishop of Milan, who knew well the terrors of Roman law, which he had formerly administered as a magistrate, kept her festival in Italy. She was a martyr at the age of twelve, says Ambrose. Horrible was the cruelty which did not spare her youth; wonderful the faith which withstood at such an age. She had within her a spirit which conquered the sword. Children of her age cannot bear an angry look upon the faces of their parents; but she stood fearless in the bloody hands of executioners, undaunted by the rattle of chains, offering herself to the sword, not knowing what death is, yet prepared to meet it.

When dragged reluctant to heathen sacrifice, she made the sign of the Cross at the very place of sacrilege. In this martyrdom is there not something new? Powerless to suffer much, she was ready for victory. Unequal to the strife but equal to the crown, her strength of character achieved what her youth precluded. Never bride went more willingly to her marriage than she to the place of suffering. All the by-standers wept; she alone shed no tears. It was an amazing sight, that one so young could part with life scarcely tasted. That which is above nature, adds S. Ambrose, is from the Author of nature. The martyrdom of S. Agnes impressed him as a witness to the supernatural truth of the Faith.

S. Jerome[1] describes a high-born lady of the fifth century strengthening her resolve to enter the religious life by contemplating the story of S. Agnes, and saying to herself, "What ails you, Demetrias? What you need is freedom and courage. If you are so panic-stricken in time of peace, what would you do if you were called on to undergo martyrdom? If you cannot bear so much as a frown from your own, how would you steel yourself to face the tribunals of persecutors? If men's examples leave you unmoved, at least gather courage and confidence from the blessed martyr Agnes, who overcame both the weakness of her youth and the violence of the tyrant, and by her martyrdom gave fresh honour to the very name of virgin."

S. Augustine's[2] words may fitly close this notice of S. Agnes: "Blessed is the holy Agnes whose martyrdom is celebrated this day,—a virgin who was truly that which her name denoted. 'Agnes' in Latin means 'A Lamb,' in Greek, 'The Chaste;' and so she was that which her name denoted, and deservedly received her crown of glory."

[1] Letter 130. [2] Serm. 273.

January 22

S. Vincent

S. VINCENT was a deacon of the Church at Saragossa in Spain. From his boyhood he had been brought up in learned studies under Valerius, Bishop of Saragossa, who ordained him deacon. Valerius, a learned man, but slow of speech, thankfully availed himself of the deacon's gifts, and entrusted him with the responsible duties of preaching and instruction. Vincent became distinguished, both by word and work. Distinction in the Church in those days marked out a man for persecution and martyrdom.

The fourth century had just begun, and with it the fiery trial under Diocletian and Maximian. The deacon and his bishop were both arrested by the brutal magistrate, Dacian, in the year 303, and were sent to Vincent's native place, Valencia. There Dacian kept them long in the prison, chained neck and hands, to break their spirit or subdue them. At length he summoned them before his tribunal, and reproached first the bishop and then the deacon for contempt of the Imperial will. To this charge Valerius made no answer. A learned but simple man, possessing no ready power of effective speech, he feared lest words might injure the cause he had at heart. Then

Vincent said, "If you bid me, my father, I will answer the magistrate." The bishop replied that, having already entrusted the deacon with the teaching of the Faith, he now entrusted him with the responsibility of defending it. Then Vincent turned to Dacian the magistrate, acknowledging that they were Christians, unable to deny their Lord, and prepared to reach the crown of immortality through the way of suffering. Dacian sentenced the bishop to exile, but, resenting the deacon's resistance, reserved him for torture, determined, if possible, to overcome him. And first the magistrate had him extended on the rack and scourged, while he mocked his agonies. Vincent bore the torture with amazing fortitude, and answered with extraordinary calm. The fury of the baffled magistrate strangely contrasted with the martyr's calm, revealing, as Augustine a century later pointed out, the powerlessness of unbelief and the mighty power of faith. "Greater is He that is in you, than he that is in the world."[1] Dacian turned his fury on the torturers themselves, and had them flogged, on the ground that they had not executed their terrible offices with sufficient zeal and fierceness.

Then he ordered the martyr to be torn with iron hooks. It was done. Dacian saw his victim's body streaming with blood, even the very entrails laid bare, horribly torn and mangled, but he saw also that the martyr's spirit was not conquered yet. Therefore, in his determination to break the force of will opposing him, he ordered Vincent to be laid upon an iron frame, below which a fire was kindled. But still Vincent remained invincible.

[1] S. John iv. 4.

After all this, bleeding and burnt, and yet still not dead, Vincent was left in prison. And there he saw a vision of glory, and was visited by the angels. The jailor, amazed and trembling, and more than half convinced, brought news of the heavenly sight to Dacian. And even Dacian himself confessed that he was overcome. He ordered Vincent to be placed upon a bed, and his wounds to be assuaged. But Vincent's mighty spirit soon passed beyond the reach of human cruelty.

S. Vincent's name was held in honour in the following ages, not merely in Spain, but also in Africa and in Christendom generally.

The Festival of S. Vincent was observed soon after his death, and became most popular.[1] In a sermon for S. Vincent's Day, formerly ascribed to S. Leo the Great, but probably composed by a preacher in Spain, the people were reminded how Vincent had by his fervent love and noble death kindled the devotion of the faithful; how he had scattered far and wide the seed of Apostolic truth, and fertilized it by his intercessions; and how he who first gave to believers the Chalice of Christ, afterwards followed the steps of Christ in His passion.[2]

Four sermons of S. Augustine, on the Feast of S. Vincent, still remain. Augustine drew the mind of the African Church to the motives which nerved men to this amazing endurance. S. Vincent, if through fear of torment he had denied Christ, might seem to have spared his own body. But in the Resurrection he who has denied Christ will be denied by Christ.[3] If we consider in this

[1] Migne, Works of S. Leo, tom. i. pp. 501–504.
[2] See also Tillemont.
[3] Sermon 277, p 1636.

martyrdom the human patience, it begins to be incredible; if we recognize the power of God, it ceases to be wonderful.

The martyrdom of S. Vincent is also taken by S. Augustine to illustrate the difference between natural courage and Christian fortitude. The difference lies in their character and in their motive. The one is a natural endowment, the other a supernatural grace; and the object for which the true martyr strives is Truth and Righteousness, God and Christ and the Faith, the Unity of the Church, and Charity.[1]

"Both the fury of Dacian and the sufferings of Vincent have passed away. Dacian is now condemned, and Vincent crowned; even here on earth Vincent's triumph is declared. For there is no province of the Roman Empire in which the Christian's name is known where the Feast of Vincent is not celebrated. Who would know the name of Dacian to-day were it not for Vincent's sake?"[2]

The martyrdom of S. Vincent was not only a theme of the preacher, it was also the subject of early Christian hymns, which still survive.[3] Vincent's example still lived on. It is appealed to by S. Bernard in the twelfth century, who records one of Vincent's sayings during his martyrdom. "You see," said Vincent, "that by the grace of God the tortured is stronger than the torturer."[4]

"In this strange encounter," says a great modern writer, "it became a point of honour with the Roman to break the determination of his victim, and it was the triumph

[1] S. Augustine, Sermon 274, p. 1627. [2] Ibid., 276.
[3] Prudentius Peristeph., hymn v.
[4] Sermons, S. Bernard. de divinis, vol. ii. p. 722.

of Faith when his most savage expedients for that purpose were found to be in vain. The martyrs shrank from suffering like other men, but natural shrinking was incommensurable with apostasy. No intensity of torture had any means of affecting what was a mental conviction; and the sovereign Thought in which they had lived was their adequate support and consolation in their death. To them the prospect of wounds and loss of limbs was not more terrible than it is to the combatant of this world. They faced the implements of torture as the soldier takes his post before the enemy's battery. They cheered and ran forward to meet his attack, and, as it were, dared him, if he would, to destroy the numbers who were ready to close up the foremost rank, as their comrades who had filled it fell. And when Rome at last found she had to deal with a host of Scævolas, then the proudest of earthly sovereignties, arrayed in the completeness of her material resources, humbled herself before a power which was founded on a new sense of the unseen." [1]

[1] Newman, "Grammar of Assent," pp. 471, 472.

February 3

S. Blasius

IT was the time of Diocletian, about the year 303. Persecution raged as far as Sebaste in Armenia, where Blasius was then bishop. Blasius was formerly a physician, and, like S. Luke, was called to be a physician of the soul. He had long edified clergy and people alike by his humility and the sanctity of his life, and on this account was chosen to be their bishop. When persecution came Blasius neither defied nor courted danger, but retreated and lived for a time in a cave upon the mountains, most probably hoping thereby to avert the peril from his flock. But Agricolaus, the magistrate, discovered his retreat and sent soldiers to arrest him. They were not unexpected. "Let us go," said Blasius, "in the name of the Lord together, for now is the acceptable time. Three times did the Lord appear to me this night, saying, 'Rise, Blasius, and offer sacrifice as thou art wont.'" When Blasius was led into Sebaste the prefect did not examine him that day, but ordered him to be put in prison. On the following day he was brought before the tribunal. Agricolaus strove to persuade him by gentleness. "Welcome, Blasius, favoured of the gods." Blasius answered, "Hail,

most noble prefect; but they are not gods, but devils, whom you mention, images of gold and silver, to be one day consigned to the flames, and their worshippers with them. Therefore, O prefect, I cannot be a friend of these, lest I perish with them."

Agricolaus, enraged at this, ordered Blasius to be beaten.

"I marvel," answered Blasius, "that you think to alienate me by blows from the love of God, and faith in the Saviour, Jesus Christ. Neither pain nor death itself can separate me from the love of God. Jesus Christ is my stronghold, the Son of the living God."

Agricolaus, seeing that Blasius, so far from yielding under pain, seemed to grow yet stronger, desisted, and ordered him to be cast again into prison. Another day was Blasius brought forth, and suspended on a rack-frame and cut with iron combs until his entire body was lacerated and torn. A third day was Blasius brought forth. "Though my body is in your power, yet have you no power over my soul," said Blasius. Agricolaus sentenced Blasius and two children to be beheaded.

Many members of the Church of Sebaste, like their bishop, received the baptism of blood. Their names are not recorded here on earth; but we are again reminded that the saintly martyrs are a multitude whom no man can number.

February 5

S. Agatha

THE Sicilian towns of Palermo and Catania lie some way to the south of Mount Etna. They witnessed in the year of grace 251 a fierce eruption of persecuting rage, one of the victims being S. Agatha. Her martyrdom illustrates the way in which personal resentment and vindictiveness worked its cruel aims through the laws against Christianity. It was not always unmixed zeal for heathenism which set the persecuting laws in motion.

Agatha, a high-born lady, had resolved from religious motives to live a virgin life in great simplicity. She laid aside the distinctions in dress usual to her social position, and appeared in the garb of the poor and the slave. In these peaceful and devout intentions she was not allowed to go unmolested. Quintian, chief magistrate of the island, although cordially hating her religion, was eager to make Agatha his wife. It was said that, being low born, he was anxious to assure his position by connection with some aristocratic house. But this inferior motive was mingled with genuine admiration. Agatha shrank from proposals which both her religion and her resolve repudiated; and to avoid his advances took refuge at

Palermo. His vanity being hurt by this rejection, the lover determined to exercise his power as a magistrate. Quintian had Agatha arrested and brought back by his officers to Catania. There he handed her over to the charge of a woman of questionable reputation, who with her daughters strove, partly by flattery and promises and partly by threats, to induce Agatha to marry Quintian and deny her faith. After a month of fruitless endeavour, the woman went to Quintian and informed him that it would be easier to soften stones and turn iron into lead than to divert this maiden from her Christian intention. Thus baffled, the young man's heart was filled with wild passion for revenge. The lover was lost in the persecutor. Under pretext of disinterested zeal for his country's gods, Quintian on his magisterial throne sat in judgment upon this hardened offender, this apostate from the heathen divinities. Then ensued, if the documents may be trusted, one of the strangest interviews. Hatred and paganism were in power; and the defenceless girl, once loved, was now pursued with passionate vindictiveness.

"Of what social rank are you?" asked the magistrate.

Agatha replied that she came of a noble house.

"If high-born, why adopt the demeanour of a slave?" asked Quintian, with reference to the simplicity of her dress and manner of living.

"Because I am the slave of Christ."

Q. "How call yourself a slave if you are high-born?"

A. "To be Christ's slave is the highest nobility."

Q. "Do not we, then, possess nobility, since we despise the service of Christ and follow the worship of the gods?"

A. "Your nobility leads to slavery, for it not only

makes you slaves of sin, but makes you worship wood and stone."

Q. "Blasphemy can be avenged by punishment. But before you come to the torture say why you despise the gods."

A. "Call them not gods, but devils."

Q. "Choose which you please—either, like a fool, suffer torture among the condemned, or, like a wise and noble person, do what nature and your rank suggest, sacrifice to the omnipotent gods, whose true divinity is certainly attested."

A. "May your wife be like your goddess Venus, and yourself like your god Jupiter."

Quintian hearing this, ordered her to be beaten, advising her not to express contempt for a judge.

A. "I marvel that you, a wise man, should consider them your gods whose life you do not wish your wife to imitate, and whose example you would not wish to follow. If these are true divinities, then I did well to wish your life to be as theirs. But if you repudiate this ideal, then you agree with me. Confess, then, that they are most base and contemptible, and that to desire any to resemble them is to imprecate a curse upon him."

Q. "A useless waste of words. Either sacrifice or suffer." And the magistrate ordered the guards to imprison her: an easier task than to refute her argument.

On the following day Agatha was cruelly tortured upon the rack, and the executioner was bidden to cut off her breast. Agatha reminded Quintian of the days when he hung as an infant upon his mother's breast. But she endured the agony. After that she was remanded to the

prison, and Quintian ordered that no physician should bind her wounds, and that none should bring her food or even water. And in the prison Agatha had a vision of a Divine messenger, who came to strengthen her. And so at last she passed beyond the reach of human brutality, which certainly had done its worst.

As soon as Quintian knew that Agatha was dead, he seized her property. But he did not long enjoy the fruits of cruelty; in crossing a river he was drowned.

In verse[1] and in prose, in hymns and in its liturgies the early Church commemorated Agatha's amazing steadfastness. Her name remains to this day in the Eucharistic Office of the Latin Church.

[1] S. Aldhelm.

February 14

S. Valentine

VALENTINE was a priest of the Church at Rome in the days of the Emperor Claudius, the second of that name. The emperor is said to have personally interrogated Valentine, and then to have entrusted him to the prefect Calpurnius, with orders to convert him to the pagan religion. Calpurnius selected the officer Asterius as suited for this duty; but Asterius, instead of converting Valentine to paganism, was himself converted to Christianity, and with his wife and family was baptized by the bishop at Rome. When Claudius heard the result he was furious, and ordered the whole family of Asterius to be executed. Valentine was reserved for a year in prison, and then beaten with rods and beheaded on the Flaminian Way, A.D. 270.[1]

[1] Baronius Annals, A.D. 270.

March 1

S. David

SPECIAL interest attaches to S. David as being the one Welsh saint[1] enrolled by general consent in the Calendars of the Western Church. The number of Welsh and Cornish saints held high in local esteem is very considerable, but none of them attained to general recognition except S. David. This fact alone would seem to show a character of marked distinction. Moreover, his popularity at an early date is evident from the number of churches which bear his name. On the other hand, the facts recorded are few; a large but legendary biography, composed some five hundred years after he was dead, shows painfully how little was really known about him.

S. David's life probably extended from the opening to the closing years of century six. It was a dark period for the Church in Wales. The year 447 saw the beginning of the Saxon Invasion. From that time onward, and during the chief part of S. David's life, was the slow but certain advance of the Saxon, and the beating back and crushing down of the power of the Briton. The Briton was no equal

[1] S. Machutus, or Malo, was Welsh by descent, but his career was in Brittany. See November 15.

for the Saxon. Slowly and surely the Briton retired from east to west, and was driven finally into the recesses of Wales and the extreme of Cornwall. No common faith came in to mitigate the fierceness of war. The pagan Saxon was all the more averse to Christianity because it was the religion of his conquered foe. And in this instance, at least, the conquered did not convert their conquerors. Every trace of Christianity, buildings, emblems, books, and altars, were in the Saxon advance to be ruthlessly swept away.

About the year 560,[1] a sort of lamentation on the condition of the British Church was written in a monastery in Wales. The writer's name is Gildas. Gildas is a Welsh Jeremiah. He exhausts the store of denunciation against unworthy priests and unprincipled rulers of the land. His book is inscribed throughout in tones of lamentation and mourning and woe. He cannot write history, he says, from authentic documents, because if any such existed they are not to be had, being either burnt by the enemy or carried away.

He characterizes the Britons as feeble in war and self-indulgent in peace, deserving all the calamities which invasion inflicted. Their iniquities, like those of the Ammorites, were fulfilled, and God called them to weeping and to sackcloth. Their blindness, their dense folly in inviting the Saxon, calls out from Gildas the severest and most indignant scorn. Their condition in his own days he describes as of the utmost wretchedness. They were scattered among the mountains. If captured, they were killed with the sword; if escaping, they died of hunger. Some, as an act of the greatest favour, were permitted to

[1] See Haddan and Stubbs. Councils, i. 44.

live as slaves; others fled across the seas, forced to cry, "O God, Thou hast cast us out, and scattered us abroad."

The lamentations of Gildas may serve to illustrate the conditions in which S. David's lot was cast. The known facts of his life are few. He was the son of a Welsh prince, and was born probably near S. David's, the city which bears his name. He became the founder of a religious society, and built his monastery where S. David's cathedral now stands. He achieved great reputation for teaching and for sanctity. He was consecrated bishop, held synods for the better discipline of both clergy and laity in Wales, and ruled apparently during the last forty years of the century.

Far out on the extremest edge of Pembrokeshire, on a promontory extending right into the sea, where the waters rush with fearful rapidity through the narrow passage between Ramsay Island and the coast, is the position chosen by S. David for his bishopric—desolate and remote from human habitation. What motive suggested the selection of so strange a spot? Was it that the pressure of the pagan Saxon had driven men in search of security and desirous of peace to retreat as far as retreat was possible into the loneliest storm-beaten places? The situation of S. David's cannot fail to strike the visitor with some such thought. The narrow strip of sea between S. David's Head and the Irish Coast would bring the fugitives from Saxon pagan violence into nearness with the Christian Church in Ireland.[1] The loneliness of S. David's chosen home may by itself pathetically illustrate the condition of the ancient British Church.

[1] Cf. Dict. Biogr. *s.v.* David.

The later years of S. David saw the beginnings of the conversion of the Saxons to Christianity. But that conversion was wrought by others rather than by the Church in Wales. Whatever was the reason, the Church in Wales contributed nothing to the conversion of their conquerors. Whether it was that their outward calamities weighed too heavily upon them, or that the inward depression of their Church paralyzed them, the missionary spirit seems to have died away. It may be that all the spiritual force of such men as S. David was expended in the effort to rouse a truer zeal among their people. S. David died in 601. The famous conference between the British bishops and S. Augustine was held a little later. S. David was spared the grief of seeing the disunion between the two Churches.

March 2

S. Chad

S. CHAD, or, as the Venerable Bede names him, Ceadda, is a character singularly gracious, humble, and unworldly.[1] He was an Angle, a Northumbrian by birth, one of four brothers, of whom two were priests, and two were bishops.[2] S. Chad was one of the disciples of S. Aidan, and drew his Christian ideals from the school of Lindisfarne, a worthy son of that noble home of piety.[3]

In 664 Chad succeeded Bishop Cedd, one of his brothers, as abbot of the monastery of Lastingham, near Whitby.[4] The church of the monastery was built of stone,[5] and dedicated to the Blessed Virgin Mother of our Lord. The whole monastery was the creation of Bishop Cedd, whose body lay buried within the church on the right side of the altar. Accordingly, Chad inherited the fruits of his brother's devotion and religious influence.

The year 664 was famous as the critical period of the controversy between the Celtic and Saxon Churches on the date of Easter. It is the year of the Council of

[1] Bede, III. xxi.
[2] Ibid., III. xxiii.
[3] Ibid., III. xxviii.
[4] Ibid., III. xxiv.
[5] That of Lindisfarne was of wood. See Bede, III. xxv.

Whitby.[1] There Wilfrid succeeded in carrying the Roman observance against the independent observance of the Celtic Church of Lindisfarne. Bishop Colman, the saintly Bishop of Lindisfarne, finding himself defeated, sorrowfully gathered up the relics of his fathers and retreated from a land no longer worthy of their retention. To the see thus vacant Wilfrid was, after a brief interval, appointed.[2]

Wilfrid immediately departed to Gaul to obtain consecration, which he ultimately received from Agilbert, formerly Bishop of the West Saxons, now Bishop of Paris. But during the long delay caused by Wilfrid's absence in Gaul, the attitude of influential persons in Northumbria changed.[3] Whether it was a reaction in favour of the Celtic missionaries or the powerful influence of Abbess Hilda, who was persistently hostile to Wilfrid, or whether the magnificent ideas and splendid talents of Wilfrid, contrasted with the unworldly simplicity of his predecessors (the Celtic Bishops of Lindisfarne), made an unfavourable impression on the mind of the Northumbrian king, who on that account desired to curtail his power by dividing his diocese,—at any rate, King Oswy induced the apostolic-minded Abbot Chad to allow himself to be consecrated Bishop of York.[4]

It is quite possible that in this strange and irregular act there was no intention to supersede the absent, but on his return Wilfrid retired at once to his monastery at Ripon, making it clear that he would either have the entire Northumbrian diocese co-extensive with the kingdom

[1] Cf. Moberly. Bede, p. 189 and 192 ff. [2] Bede, III. xxviii.
[3] Montalembert. [4] Wace, Dictionary of Eccles. Biogr.

or nothing. Accordingly, Chad administered the diocese for some four years, until the Visitation of Archbishop Theodore in 669. During these years Wilfrid lived in obscurity, and Chad discharged his duties with apostolic simplicity,[1] moving on foot throughout his vast diocese, like a true disciple of S. Aidan and brother of Cedd, distinguished for his humility, his self-denial, his studiousness, his constant evangelistic labours through towns and villages and country. But when Archbishop Theodore began his official Visitation it was inevitable that Chad's position should be considered. The condition was anomalous. Wilfrid was the lawful bishop. The diocese ought not to have been divided without his consent. And the lawful bishop, determined, resolute, unbending, exercising the mere functions of an abbot, while his diocese was ruled by another intruded without his authority and against his will,—this was a condition which ought not to have arisen, and could not possibly continue.

In what way the humble-minded Chad reconciled his intrusion with his duty does not appear.[2] But when Archbishop Theodore expressed disapproval on the ground that he had not been duly consecrated, the saintly intruder replied in terms of such humility and gentleness as to win all men's admiration. "If," said Chad, "it is clear to you beyond question that I have not duly received the Episcopate, I willingly retire from office. Indeed, I never thought myself worthy; but being ordered, unworthy as I was, for the sake of obedience did I undertake it."

Theodore, moved by Chad's deep humility, declared

[1] Bede, III. xxviii. [2] Ibid, III. ii.

that such a man ought not to cease from the duties of a bishop. But he replaced Wilfrid in the See of Northumbria.[1]

Chad calmly retired to his quiet monastery at Lastingham, where he resumed his former peaceful occupations.[2] But he was not to spend his days in the simple duties of an abbot. In a few months, at the most, the Bishop of the Mercians died, and King Wulphere appealed to Archbishop Theodore to appoint a successor. Theodore determined to establish Chad in Mercia; but resolved that he must first be reconsecrated.

This fresh consecration of Chad has long been an historical perplexity. Theodore points definitely to no clear irregularity in the actual consecration. It was performed by three bishops, and it seems a natural conclusion that Theodore was here exacting conditions of a canonical consecration beyond those which had satisfied the mind of the Universal Church. Theodore's real objection to Chad's consecration was probably that two of his consecrators were British bishops.[3] For Theodore refused to recognize the orders of the British Church because that Church was in its usages independent of the Communion of Rome.[4]

Chad yielded also to this, and, with a submissiveness which won the admiration of the now dominant Roman school, received consecration to the Episcopate. Thus Chad became Bishop of Lichfield, and once again drew to himself the hearts of all men by his simplicity of life. He took long journeys on foot until Theodore bade

[1] Bede, IV. iii. [2] Ibid.

[3] Ibid., III xxviii.; and Moberly, p. 215.

[4] See Theodore, "Penitential," II. ix 1; and Bishop of Bristol, "Theod. and Wilfrith," p. 95. So also Montalembert, iv. 213, and note.

him ride at least the longer distances, and the archbishop himself held the stirrup before he could prevail on the humble-minded saint to mount.[1]

In the intervals of his evangelistic work Chad returned to Lichfield, and there lived in monastic style with seven or eight brethren not far from the church. So, blessing and blessed of all men, Chad spent the brief two and a half years of his Lichfield labours. But the extent of Chad's influence cannot be measured by the brevity of his Episcopate. His single-minded, unworldly life made a lasting impression. The fair example of lowliness, fervour, and voluntary poverty shone out gracious and winning; and the close of his life was calm and beautiful, a fit ending to a calm and saintly career. Chad was left in the house at Lichfield with brother Ouin; all the others were at church. Brother Ouin had heard that day sounds of sweetest and joyous chant and thanksgiving, descending from heaven and wafted to the earth, coming nearer and nearer until it reached the house where Chad was living. Half an hour after Ouin heard the melodies of ineffable sweetness begin again at the house and proceed in a reverse way from earth to heaven, and die away mysteriously among the clouds.[2] Ouin remained lost in wonder. Presently Chad opened a window of the oratory of the house, and with his hand summoned, as was his custom, any of the brethren without to come to him. Ouin entered the house. "Go quickly to the church," said Chad, "and call the seven brethren hither, and do you also return." And when they came Chad gave them his parting counsels. He exhorted them chiefly to love and peace,

[1] Bede, IV. iii. [2] Ibid.

both toward each other and toward all the faithful. And whatever they had learnt of monastic discipline, either from his own example or his teaching, or from the words and deeds of their fathers, let them labour eagerly in imitation. "For that kindly visitor who is wont to call our brethren has visited me also this day, and graciously summoned me from the world. Therefore return to the Church, and bid the brethren that they commend my departing soul to our Lord, and, mindful of the uncertainty of their own departure, prepare for it by watching and prayer and holy deeds." The seven brothers withdrew. Brother Ouin remained. "My father," said Ouin, "may I ask you a question?" Chad assented. "Tell me," asked Ouin, "what was that song of rejoicing which I heard wafted from heaven to earth and back again to heaven?" "Didst thou hear it?" replied Chad. "Didst thou recognize its heavenly origin? Then I bid thee in the Name of the Lord tell no man till I am dead. For this was the Song of the Angels. In seven days will they bear my soul away with them."

And so it came to pass. After six days Chad strengthened himself for his journey by the reception of the Sacred Body and Blood, and, as we may well believe, sought with angel companions the joys of Paradise. So Bede concludes his narrative with one more look back, as if reluctant to leave a life which filled him with delight.

Chad's devout mind saw the movements of God in the facts of external nature. If when Chad was at work or study a storm of wind arose, he instantly resorted to prayer, calling on Him, Who maketh the storm to cease,

to guide it to the benefit of men. And if the storm rose louder, Chad would close his book, and fall upon his face on the earth, and pray yet more earnestly. And if the heavens were dark with clouds, and flashes of the lightning darted out, and thunder reverberated along the air, then Chad would enter the church, and give himself to psalm and entreaty, until the violence of the storm was spent and peace returned. And when they asked him why he did these things, he replied with the inquiry, Had they never read that "The Lord also thundered out of heaven, and the Highest gave His thunder. . . . He sent out His arrows, and scattered them. He cast forth lightnings, and destroyed them"?[1]

"The Lord makes the wind to rise, casts forth the lightning, thunders out of heaven, to rouse the dwellers upon earth to greater fear of Him, to wake in their hearts thoughts of the judgment to come, to reduce their pride, reminding them of that time when heaven and earth shall pass away, when He shall come in power and great glory to judge the living and dead. Therefore we ought to respond to His heavenly warning with becoming fear and love. Whenever He threatens, yet strikes not, we should at once entreat His mercy, and drive from our hearts the evil which stirs His indignation."[2]

The death of S. Chad was on March 2, A.D. 672.[3]

[1] Ps. xviii. 13, 14. [2] Bede, IV. iii. [3] Ibid.

March 7

S. Perpetua

IT was the year of Grace 202. A group of men and women were under soldiers' charge at Carthage in the common prison. There was Revocatus and Felicitas, Saturninus and Secundulus. But more distinguished than these by birth and education was Perpetua. High-born, tenderly nurtured, idolized by her father, best loved of all his children, she seems to have lived encircled by the deepest human affection. She was just in the full glory of her youth—a wife and a mother at the age of twenty-two.

Her home was purely pagan. Her father and mother were both adherents of the old and popular idolatry; but upon herself had the Light shined. The appeal of the Crucified had come with irresistible power, stronger than the home and national traditions, stronger than the strongest human interests and human love. Although not yet baptized, Perpetua had, definitely and for ever, broken with her country's gods. Hence this prison. Acceptance of the Christian Faith had parted her from her infant son, and enclosed within these narrow, repulsive limits one whose life had been hitherto sheltered

and shielded, and upon whom affection had always lavished its sweetest and best. It was only natural if her father's anger rose furious against the religion which had ruined his happiness, and placed a barrier between him and his child. He passionately implored her in the prison to abandon this new-found faith. Let her, at least, forego the name of Christian. If only she would consent so far he knew that he could save her. There was a pitcher of water standing by; Perpetua pointed to it. "Father," she said, "can this be called by any other name than what it is? Neither can I call myself anything but what I am—a Christian." Fierce was the old man's anger. "He threw himself upon me," she writes, "as if he would tear out my eyes."

The old paganism could be fierce and violent, but it had no strength against the might of faith. The whole position was, to the pagan, unintelligible. Acquiescing in a religion which probably meant but little to him, he had not the remotest conception of the overwhelming power of Christianity. He was moving in a different world. He had nothing to offer which had even the semblance of attractiveness to one already conquered by the persuasiveness of the Crucified. It was infinitely pathetic. He failed, as he was bound to fail, yet understood not why he failed. He could not change her conviction, but he greatly increased her distress. The old man grieved and left her, and for some days she did not see him, and she owns that it was a relief not to see him.

Meanwhile she suffered, but her sufferings were of a different kind, and doubtless easier to bear. Thrust down with her companions into a dungeon, Perpetua, for the first

time in her life, experienced a darkness that might be felt. The stifling heat, the coarse rough soldiery, the crowding of prisoners in narrow space, were, to one so tenderly nurtured, almost intolerable.

And to this was added a mother's anxiety for her infant son. But the deacons who were permitted entrance secured through payment to the jailors that the prisoners should spend a few hours each day in a healthier part of the prison, and that Perpetua might have her infant with her. To Perpetua this concession seemed to change the dungeon itself into a palace, and she was more than satisfied.

The suspense of the tedious hours in prison led the little group to ask what would the issue be. They sought for answer in a dream. Perpetua dreamed of golden stairs rising from earth to heaven, beautiful but exceeding narrow, fringed on either side with swords and hooks and lances, a dangerous avenue whereon each must ascend by himself alone, and with instant care and gaze fixed upwards, otherwise he must be cut to pieces by the fence of iron. Beneath at the foot of the ascent crouched a monstrous dragon, bent on terrifying all who would ascend. One of Perpetua's companions ascended first. When he reached the top of the ascent he turned and said, "I wait for you, Perpetua, only take heed lest the dragon bite you." And Perpetua answered, "In the Name of the Lord Jesus Christ he shall not hurt me." Then she trod upon his head, and ascended the golden stairs. She found herself in a beautiful garden, and in the midst a white-haired Shepherd fed his flock, and thousands of white-robed saints were standing round. And the Shepherd raised his head and looked upon Perpetua, and welcomed her, and gave her a little

cake, and as she received the gift with folded hands all who stood around murmured Amen. And at the sound Perpetua awoke to earthly realities, to the dungeon and the heat and the darkness. But the sweet taste was still abiding, and she still heard the sound of the heavenly voices. And they understood that the dream meant martyrdom, and all their hope of this world was departed.

Then once again her aged father came to visit her in prison, for he had heard that in a few days their trial would begin. No longer violent and fierce, but gentle and piteous and broken-hearted, he pleaded by his grey hairs, by his tender love for her, by his affection lavished on her above all his children, by the glory of her youth, by the claims of her infant child; he pleaded with all the constraining power of human love and agony. He kissed her hands, he threw himself at her feet, he wept, he called her by titles of honour and endearment. He uttered such words as might move creation, but he uttered them in vain.

Then came the trial. There was a high platform erected in the public place, so that all might see and hear. Dense crowds surrounded it when Perpetua and her companions stood before Hilarian the magistrate.

Once more human love strove hard to draw her away from Christ. When Perpetua's turn to mount the platform came, her father interposed, drew her aside, held up her child, and cried beseechingly, "Have pity on your child!" Even Hilarian was moved. "Spare your father's grey hairs, spare your child," he counselled, "and offer sacrifice for the well-being of the Emperor." Perpetua refused. Hilarian asked whether she was a Christian, and she

answered, "I am a Christian." In his agony of grief her father clamoured and interrupted, and the magistrate ordered the lictors to strike him. Perpetua declared that she felt the blows as keenly as if inflicted upon herself. Hilarian gave judgment that the accused should be condemned to the wild beasts. Back to their dungeon went Perpetua and her companions rejoicingly. She asked once more for her child, but her father refused to send him.

And in the prison Perpetua remembered her brother departed, who died when a child of seven, and she began most fervently to pray for him. In a dream she saw the child, but could not approach to him, for between them was a great gulf fixed. She saw him pallid and diseased, and in a gloomy place, thirsting for water which he could not reach, for the fountain's edge was raised too high. Perpetua awoke, and knew that the child was not at rest, and day and night she wept and prayed for him. Perpetua dreamed again. She saw the child once more, no longer pale and suffering from disease, for the fountain's edge was lowered, and he drank of the waters, and was refreshed, and ran away to play right joyfully. Then Perpetua awoke, and knew that her prayer for the dead was heard, and the child translated to the place of happiness.

The entire story of Perpetua up to this point is taken from her own narrative, written by herself while still in prison. The actual story of her martyrdom was added by some unknown eye-witness afterwards.

The last meal of the condemned was, according to custom, partaken of in public. The pagan criminal was permitted to spend his latest hours in revelry and

licentiousness. Very different was the conduct of the Christian martyrs as the crowd came round to watch them.

"Mark well our faces," answered a martyr, "that you may know us again on the Judgment Day." The sight-seers departed, silenced, impressed, and many of them believed. Night fell. The day of martyrdom dawned. Perpetua and her companions were led to the Amphitheatre. As was the custom for the condemned, they were bidden at the gates to clothe themselves in pagan priestly vestments. The men were to be dressed like priests of Saturn, the women like priestesses of Ceres. But the martyrs firmly refused; they were surrendering their lives to avoid contamination with any pagan rites. And the pagans themselves acknowledged the justice of their claim.

Perpetua sang psalms. The others, when in sight of Hilarian, exclaimed, "Thou judgest us; one day God will judge thee." That reference to a great tribunal when all human judgments should be revised and many reversed stung the crowd to vindictive rage. They demanded that the martyrs should be scourged. There was a line of gladiators placed at intervals, each armed with a cruel scourge, and each struck these defenceless disciples of our Lord as they passed by. The two women, Perpetua and Felicitas, were tossed and gored by an infuriated beast. Perpetua fell to earth. She drew her torn robe around her, more mindful of her modesty than her pain. The brutal tastes of the mob were for the moment satisfied, and Perpetua was withdrawn from the arena. There, in some chamber probably beneath the theatre, she lay almost

unconscious, in a sort of trance, presently, to the amazement of the bystanders, asking when she was to be led out to the beasts. And only after their assurances that it was already past, and on seeing the marks of blood, did she realize that it was even so.

Then rose again a clamour. Those in the theatre would have the martyrs brought out, that the death-stroke might be inflicted upon them before the eyes of the spectators. And so Felicitas and Perpetua were led out into the arena to be slain. Perpetua stood fearless before the youthful gladiator, who, quite unnerved, held his sword, but trembled and could not strike until she herself guided his hand to her throat, and so by one stroke departed into the presence of her Lord.

"O brave and blessed martyrs," exclaims the recorder of their passion, "most truly called to the glory of Jesus Christ! Whosoever magnifies and honours and adores Jesus Christ ought surely to read these examples for the edifying of the Church."

The passion of S. Perpetua and S. Felicitas was a favourite theme in the primitive Church. It is the subject of sermons by S. Augustine, who commemorates them in the sentence: "Perpetua and Felicitas, companions in perpetual felicity."

March 12

S. Gregory

THERE occur in the records of every nation certain incidents which appeal so strongly to the national sentiment as to stand out in luminous distinction from the general confused and misty state into which the common scenes of history have retreated. These famous incidents are in the memory of all, known to the children of a people. A transient allusion is sufficient to recall the entire scene, for none can fail to know what the speaker means.

Of such famous incidents there is to Englishmen none more permanently vivid than that which occurred to some English boys in the streets of Rome in the middle of the sixth century.[1]

Familiar as it is, the story always has to be retold, and as nearly as possible in the inimitable words of Bede. In the market-place in Rome, among other goods set up for sale, were certain English boys. Among the crowd came Gregory. The fair faces, the fair hair of the Saxon children led Gregory to ask whence they came. He was told that they had been brought from the

[1] Bede, II. i. § 89.

island of Britain. "Are they Christians or heathen?" Gregory asked. "They are pagans," was the reply. Gregory sighed deeply. "Alas that the prince of darkness should be lord over men so fair; that beings so graceful without, should be so graceless within!" Then he asked, "What is their nation called?" He was told that they were Angles. "Rightly so," he answered, "for they have angel faces; they must be fellow-heirs with the angels in heaven. And what is the name of the province whence they come?" He was told that the natives of that province were called Deiri. "Rightly so," said Gregory. "They are withdrawn *de ira* from the wrath of God, and called to the mercy of Christ. How is the king of that province named?" "He is called Ella," was the reply. "And, Alleluia!" rejoined Gregory, "the praise of God the Creator must be sung in that land." [1]

Now, the sight of those children in the slave-market made upon the tender-hearted monk far more than a transitory impression. He could not let his religious emotion evaporate in idle sentiment, or satisfy his conscience by a contribution towards missionary work. Deeply moved, he went at once to the Pope, asked that some messenger of the Word of God should be despatched to the Angles in Britain, and volunteered to throw in his lot among them. The Pope would have consented, but the people of Rome forbade it.[2]

As it is vividly expressed in the narrative of a later time, the Pope actually gave his consent, and Gregory and his companions departed from Rome.[3] But when the citizens discovered that Gregory had silently stolen away with the Pope's consent, they determined to have him

[1] Bede, II. ii. [2] Ibid., II. i. [3] Paulus Diaconus, § 14.

recalled. They crowded into the Church of S. Peter, and cried out reproachfully to the Pope, O thou Apostolic man, what is this that thou hast done? Thou hast angered S. Peter, thou hast ruined Rome, thou hast not so much dismissed our Gregory as expelled him!

Before this vehement storm of rebuke the Pope gave way; as he consented to let Gregory go, so he now consented to fetch him back. But Gregory had three days' start.

By the roadside in the noontide heat Gregory was resting with his companions in a meadow. He sat and read, and as he read a locust leaped upon the open page, and there remained. It was a bad omen, thought Gregory. "We shall not be permitted to proceed," he said. "Be quick, and hasten forward as fast as we can go." *Locusta* signifies, thought Gregory, *loco sta*—"stop where you are." And that very moment, panting and breathless with the dust and heat of the road, horsemen drew up, bearing the Pope's letter recalling the expedition.

Baffled in his attempt to come in person, Gregory never forgot his purpose, and in process of time, when called to occupy the highest place in the Western Church, he was enabled to send others to undertake the labour upon which his own heart had been fixed.

The family of Gregory held distinguished rank among the proudest aristocracy of ancient Rome. Descended from the great Anician House which had sent many of its sons into the Senate, he inherited the best that Rome could give, whether in wealth, in traditions, in rank, or in faith. When barely thirty,[1] imperial selection had already

[1] ? A.D. 570.

called him to the second highest place in Italy, that of Prefect of Rome, his only superior in the West being the Exarch of Ravenna. In his rigorous but popular administration he availed himself to the full of the advantages of his wealth, and paraded the streets of Rome with the grandeur appropriate to his rank and office. But in the discharge of purely secular functions the heir of Roman nobility was dissatisfied; for Gregory had been trained in the highest ideals of the Christian Faith, and to his deeply religious mind the monastic ideal appealed with persuasive influence. All through his boyhood and his youth, the work of S. Benedict,[1] the cloistered homes of devotion and self-discipline, had exercised upon him a special fascination. Yet, on the other hand, he felt the attractions of wealth and power; and it was no easy thing for this heir to large estates to make the sacrifice which the monastic life required. At length, however, he broke abruptly with the world which loved him, founded six monasteries on his own property in Sicily, and placed a community of monks in his own mansion in Rome, and became himself simply one of their number, under an abbot's rule, serving as a novice in the very house where he formerly ruled as the master.

Each of the seven communities was sufficiently endowed by Gregory for daily maintenance, and the remainder of his property was sold for the benefit of the poor. Rome looked on with mingled feelings while he who lately appeared in the silken raiment of wealth and dignity now moved along the self-same streets in mean apparel, in poverty, ministering to the necessities of the poor.

[1] See March 21.

Thus Gregory was wholly absorbed in the interests of the Faith. He laid aside utterly all secular ambitions, and, in the language of that age, escaping from the shipwreck of the world, destitute of all things, took refuge in the haven of monastic life. Self-denial, austerity, solitude, devotion, fasting to an excess which induced great weakness and suffering,—these were now the daily experiences of the young man reared in wealth and high estate.

From the strife and stress of his later labours in the restless world, Gregory would often in after years look back wistfully upon that time of seclusion, self-discipline, and peace. He even wept to recall the calm unworldliness of those days when his mind was wholly given to spiritual contemplation, and when, although in the body, he had almost seemed to escape by devotion the limits of the painful flesh. Death from which man's nature shrinks had seemed in those days the desirable crown of labour, the longed-for entrance into life. But now, distracted by the passions of secular affairs, soiled with the dust of earthly and mean transactions, if he contrasted what he endured with that which he had lost, the contrast made that loss still greater. As a bishop he complains that in the storms of life and the conflicting interests and details of his duty he could scarcely ever see the quiet haven whence as a man of prayer he had issued forth.[1]

Gregory's ideal was thoroughly and entirely monastic.[2] But he was not permitted a life of entire seclusion. His actual career was widely different from his early plans or anticipations.

The sagacity of Gregory's ecclesiastical superiors did not

[1] Paulus Diaconus in Migne, vol. 75. [2] Bede, II. i.

fail to perceive the great practical genius concealed beneath the monk's obscurity; and Gregory, much against his will, was drawn from the cloister to the diaconate, and then into contact with a manner of life strangely repugnant to his mind, being sent as representative of the Roman See to the Court of Constantinople.[1]

Here he did his best to retain the austerity of a convent in the atmosphere of a palace, and while officially connected with the social and political life of the Court, gathered round him in his own home a group of monks.[2] He needed their example and support to hold fast to the calm shore of prayer. His dwelling was a monastery, and to him a haven of refuge, where the rules of religious life were duly observed, a corrective to the deadening influence of worldly affairs.

Gregory selected for his meditations the Book of Job. His threefold exposition, the literal, the mystical, the moral,[3] although doubtless uncongenial to the prevailing temper of our time, was, when written and for centuries afterwards, received with gratitude, and studied with admiration.

Gregory's residence at Constantinople was marked by one brief attempt at theological controversy. He strove to correct the theology of no less a person than the patriarch. Eutychius, Patriarch of Constantinople, held and published certain theories on the resurrection of the dead, which to the mind of Gregory were erroneous. Accordingly, an earnest conference took place between them. Eutychius maintained that the Resurrection body would be intangible, and more subtle than air. Gregory declared this theory

[1] Bede, II. i. [2] Ibid. [3] Cf. Bede, "H. E.," II. i.

irreconcilable with the Catholic Faith. While acknowledging that the Resurrection body would be spiritualized, he denied that it would be impalpable, and appealed to the words of the risen Lord, "Handle Me, and see." Eutychius replied that the text was no contradiction to his theory, the solidity of the Lord's Resurrection body being nothing more than an accommodation to the disciples' incredulity, temporarily granted in order to strengthen their faith. Gregory retorted that this interpretation reassures the disciples' faith at the expense of our own; for if Christ did not really possess what He exhibited, the reality of His Resurrection is destroyed. Eutychius denied this inference, affirming that Christ really possessed at the time a palpable body, which, however, after serving its evidential purpose, returned to an ethereal, impalpable state. Gregory held that this contradicted the text, "Christ, being raised from the dead, dieth no more." Eutychius failed to see the connection, and appealed to the text, "Thou sowest not that body that shall be." Gregory's answer was that these words do not imply the future absence of anything now present, but the future presence of many things now absent.

It can hardly be said that Gregory shone as a controversialist, or that he exhibited any deep skill as a theologian against his opponent. If the majority agreed with him, it was scarcely as the outcome of his reasoning. However, the dispute increased his reputation. It was held in the imperial presence, and with such earnestness that both disputants were obliged to take to their beds immediately afterwards.

From these disputations in the province of a somewhat

abstract theology Gregory was called back to the practical difficulties of the hour by a letter from his master at Rome. Pope Pelagius wrote to his venerable son, Deacon Gregory, bidding him urgently to plead with the emperor for protection against the ravages of the Lombards. The Exarch of Ravenna would not or could not send him help. Affairs at Rome were deplorable.

Gregory was reserved for closer and more intimate knowledge of Lombard depredations. After six years at Constantinople he was recalled to the Eternal City.[1] Once more in Rome, Gregory took refuge in the midst of the Community formed in his father's house, and was elected as their abbot. He required of all strict adherence to monastic principles. A brother skilled in medical art concealed three golden coins among his drugs. When dying he confessed his disobedience. Gregory refused to allow the body to be laid to rest in the Community's burial-place.

After his return to Rome followed an incident which, although in itself comparatively trivial, placed upon him the highest responsibilities. An inundation of the Tiber was followed by a pestilence, and in the pestilence many died.[2]

Gregory addressed the terrified and weeping survivors of the plague. While parents followed their children to the grave, and lamented the death of those who in the natural order should have been their heirs, Gregory endeavoured to turn their natural grief into spiritual gain. He exhorted them to unite in a solemn act of deprecation. He divided the entire Church into seven companies, in the first the

[1] A.D. 584. [2] Paulus Diaconus, p. 46.

clergy, in the second the laymen, in the third the monks, in the fourth the communities of women, in the fifth the married women, in the sixth the widows, in the seventh the children.[1]

Through the plague-laden air this great procession moved, singing their solemn litanies; and even while they sang the cruel pestilence crept upon them. While the procession lasted no less than eighty men fell sick and died. But on moved Gregory with his solemn prayer, standing between the dead and living, and praying until the plague was stayed.

From this act of faith and devotion Gregory returned to find that among the victims the Pope himself had fallen. Then, with one voice, the will of the people rested on Gregory to succeed him. And he who fled not from the pestilence fled from the papacy. The popular choice must wait for the imperial assent, and Gregory wrote urgently entreating to be spared this burden; but the Roman prefect intercepted Gregory's letter, and the imperial assent was given.

Gregory disguised and concealed himself in the woods outside Rome; but he was led back amid popular triumph to his reluctant consecration. Nothing is said in Gregory's case of ordination as priest. Nor was there in the case of Ambrose. The greater office includes the less.

Right well might Gregory shrink in all sincerity from the heavy burden now imposed upon him. To the sense of personal unworthiness was added a strong predilection for the calm of monastic life. But quite apart from these, the critical period through which the Church was passing

[1] John Diaconus, p. 80.

might well cause the bravest and most faithful of men to tremble at such responsibilities.

Gregory wrote in the following terms to the Empress at Constantinople on the subject of his consecration. "His serene highness the Emperor when he constituted Gregory Pope has ordered an ape to be made a lion. But great as he is, even the Emperor may give the ape that name, but cannot endow it with that nature. The Emperor must take the responsibility of Gregory's blunders, since he thought fit to entrust so responsible a position to so powerless a person."[1]

Gregory's first care was to secure, if possible, external peace. There was the Lombard invasion. Twenty years before his consecration the incompetence of the imperial power had compelled them to call in the Lombards to aid them against the Goths. For the moment this succeeded. But the Lombards, having once tasted the delights of Italy, reluctantly departed and speedily returned. Their brutal chieftain, Albion, compelled his wife to use as a drinking-cup her own father's skull, whom he had slain. Albion met a violent death, and the Lombards were parted among several generals. In religion Arian or Pagan, in customs rude and barbaric, they had little in common with the Catholics of Italy. Ten years before Gregory's consecration the monks of Monte Casino fled before them into Rome, while Benedict's famous foundation was burnt and ruined. The Lombard progress was a trail of ravage and ruin. Desolated cities, blackened churches, monasteries destroyed, lands uncultivated, abandoned dwellings, populous places changed to solitudes and homes of wild

[1] Book i. ep. 5.

beasts—these were the familiar tokens of Lombard movements. By the time that Gregory was consecrated they occupied most of Italy excepting Rome and the marshes of Ravenna.

When the Lombards drew near to Rome, Gregory made strenuous exertions for peace. But he stood in an anomalous position. Possessing great political influence, yet accredited with no secular authority, and frequently abandoned by unscrupulous imperial representatives at Ravenna, he was powerless to effect what his sagacity knew to be necessary. Still, whatever mitigation of the penalties of siege and war ensued was Gregory's work.[1] But the Lombards entered Rome, and massacred and mutilated in the city; and when the invaders withdrew, the Roman soldiers, complaining of arrears of pay, were mutinous and ill-disposed to guard the walls.

The horror of these events threw Gregory into sickness. Hostile swords without and mutiny within were sore trials added to the spiritual burdens of his office.[2]

And here we reach the acts which more than any other should place this great and saintly man in the hearts of Englishmen. "He is," says an early biographer, "*the Apostle of the English nation.*"[3] Gregory never forgot the fair-haired Saxon slaves in the Roman market-place. It was his practice to purchase slaves, train them in the Faith, give them their liberty, and send them back to their nation, and so to introduce the Light of the World into the shadow of death. Whether he did this with the Saxon children whom he saw in the market, there remains no record to say. But he was bent on the conversion

[1] Book ii. ep. 46. [2] Ep. 3. [3] John Diaconus, p. 61.

of their nation.[1] Probably nearly twenty years had passed since the days when Gregory, as a simple monk, felt his heart deeply stirred within him at those fair faces and their inner darkness. Now at last the time had come to realize his desire for them. In his own monastery of S. Andrew the men were found competent for so grave and grand a mission.

Assuredly it was, as has well been said, a bold and noble thought, in those perilous days, when Rome seemed ready to perish, and social order was broken up, and a smaller mind would have been, if not wholly absorbed in local needs, then devoid of heart for far-off enterprise—to send men upon an errand which might have seemed Quixotic, to found churches beyond the edge of civilization. It is a proof of strong, undaunted faith. It is an act which certainly none but a deeply devout and devoted man would have undertaken. For, of course, Gregory could not read the future. He could have no remote conception of the mighty expansion of the Anglo-Saxon race. All he could see was an ignorant barbaric tribe, for whom in human probability no brilliant destinies waited, uninteresting except for the sake of Christ. It was enough to Gregory that they were men for whom Christ died, and therefore Gregory loved them and laboured for their salvation. The story of the mission itself must be reserved for S. Augustine's Day.[2] But our tribute of gratitude to this apostolic-minded man must be given now.

The burden of secular business which fell upon Gregory was enormous. His vigilant gaze seemed everywhere.

[1] Cf. Migne, p. 365. [2] See May 26.

He had a marvellous knowledge of detail.[1] His correspondence with the bishops is constant and minute. A bishop in Syracuse found a false measure employed by rent-collectors in the estates of the Church. Gregory congratulated him on having broken that lying measure. Let the bishop see that the excess be returned to the inhabitants, and keep the Day of Judgment in perpetual view.[2] Gregory hears that the Archdeacon of the Church of Ancona is desired as bishop. He is learned in the Scripture, but worn out with age and unable to rule. Rusticus, deacon of the same Church, is chosen as bishop. He is a capable person, but does not know the psalms. Gregory directs a neighbouring bishop to find out how many psalms Rusticus can say from memory.[3] Gregory deprecates too frequent episcopal journeys to the Eternal City. Once in three years is too often, but all bishops must come once in five years.[4] His letters to the bishops are full of considerateness. A certain bishop is poor: Gregory sends him a winter coat. Another is infirm: Gregory sends him a horse to help him about his diocese. Another has a well-furnished house, but nothing for the poor: Gregory is indignant, and tells him so. Another has broken up images of the saints as a preventive of idolatry: Gregory reproves him. To forbid idolatry is well, to break images of the saints is mistaken. There is no necessary connection between pictures and idolatry.[5] Pictures are the books of the uneducated. Images were not set up in a church for worship, but for purposes of instruction. Another bishop was a teacher of pagan

[1] Ep. 10. [2] Migne, p. 118. [3] Ibid., p. 138.
[4] Ibid., p. 145. [5] Ibid, p. 146.

literature: Gregory objected. The praises of Jove cannot issue from the same lips as the praises of Jesus. Let the bishop mend his ways. He must not devote his time to instructing others in worldly literature.[1]

When Gregory was first consecrated he feared the unspiritualizing effect of endless detail. Under pretext of the Episcopate he said he was actually brought down into the world. Keenly alive to the beauty of the contemplative life, he knows that he is excluded.[2] While he fain would take his seat with Mary at the Master's feet, he is unwillingly forced into distracting external ministrations. He compares himself to the smoke which *ascendendo deficit et sese dilatando evanescit*—"The higher it rises, the less it becomes;" so it was with himself, he feared, in ecclesiastical dignity. But Gregory's character to the last shows that the deeply religious mind need not become unspiritual, but may be matured amid the interminable details of half-secular questions. He certainly retained a wonderfully devotional spirit far down below his daily and incessant activities.

Gregory's pastoral ideal was that a prelate should be one who balanced a discreet silence with timely speech, near to all in sympathy, superior to all in unworldliness, occupied with external duties, yet never relaxing inward contemplation.[3] As the names of the Twelve Patriarchs were engraved on the breastplate of the high priest, so should a prelate have the Fathers of the Church engraved upon his breast; he must make them his continual meditation.[4] The prelate's example must be lofty. Was

[1] Migne, p. 148.
[2] Ibid., p. 83.
[3] S. Gregory, "Pastoral Rule," ii. 1.
[4] Ibid., ch. ii.

it not written, Get thee up into the high mountain, thou that bringest good tidings ?[1] As the ephod of the priest was interwoven of gold and blue and purple and scarlet,[2] so in the prelate's character should many virtues be interwoven.

Gregory keenly felt that the priestly ideal was contemplation and activity. His knowledge of human nature showed him that while some are drawn towards the former, others are drawn towards the latter, and that both classes need the special cultivation of the side towards which they are not inclined. "Some," he said, "are delighted in being perpetually in motion, and consequently are ignorant of the inner realm. For these what is essential is contemplation. Others are so bent on leisure for spiritual concerns that they grudge every moment spent in external duties. These must cultivate activity."[3]

There is very great practical wisdom in Gregory's advice how different classes of men are to be admonished. It is evidently the outcome of large experience and knowledge of human nature.[4] "The simple are to be praised for never saying what is false; they must learn to be sometimes silent about what is true."[5]

According to S. Gregory, much discretion is needed in teaching deeper truth. If the soul be strained beyond its capability, serious injury is inflicted.

"The faithful and wise steward must give the household their portion in due season, measured out according to their needs. In Exodus, if any dig a cistern and fail to

[1] Isa. xl. 9.
[2] Exod. xxviii. 8.
[3] "Pastoral Rule," pt. ii. chap. vii.
[4] Ibid., ii. 6.
[5] Ibid., pt. iii. chap. xi. p. 33.

cover it, and an ass or an ox fall in, he who digs must pay the price of the loss." [1] The application to teachers is obvious.

Gregory shrewdly rebukes the impetuous haste to begin the responsible work of a preacher while barely qualified. "While men rashly accept its burdens they deprive themselves of the opportunity of proficiency. The unfledged bird attempts to fly, but sinks lower than the spot from whence he started. Beams laid on walls not yet compacted do not make a habitation, but a ruin. Untimely births do not fill houses, but graves. Hence it was that the order was given, 'Tarry ye in the city until ye be endued with power from on high.' Remain silent within the enclosure of the soul, until fully gifted with power Divine. Then from our self-instruction we may go abroad instructing others." Let them remember that Christ Himself would not become a teacher of men until He was thirty years old. Even He Who could not fail did not preach the grace of a perfect life until He was of perfect age.[2]

The name of Gregory is inseparably linked with the development of the music of the Church. He founded the school of religious music in Rome. He was himself for a time master of the boys. The couch on which he rested, the rod with which he kept the boys in order, were long preserved as memorials of Gregory's work in improving the singing of the Church. The modulations arranged by Gregory became the rule for other Churches. Germans and Gallicans learnt to chant in Rome. Both, however, complains the biographer, modified the severity of the Gregorian chants, intermingling certain variations of their

[1] See "Pastoral Rule," pt. iii. chap. xxxix. p. 71. [2] Ibid., iii. 25.

own, national levity preventing unqualified appreciation. Charles, King of France, observing the difference between the Roman and the Gallican chanting, rebuked the Church of his country with the inquiry whether the river were purer than its source, and sent his clergy to Rome in order that the more florid Gallican inflections might be brought back to the sterner simplicity.

Very broad in this great man's heart was sympathy with the poor. Every day he sent out food for the needy from his own table, and observed the most delicate tact and considerateness lest the sensitive feelings of poverty should be wounded. A poor man was found one morning dead, evidently from want of food. Gregory was so distressed that for several days he would not venture to say Mass, regarding himself as personally responsible. There was preserved in the Lateran palace a register containing the name and condition of every person in Rome and its vicinity, extending even as far as the neighbouring towns and cities on the coast—a notable witness to the individual pastoral care bestowed in those restless and uncertain times.

Gregory's genius is of the *practical* kind. He is not given to abstract speculation, but rather to the bearing of doctrine upon conduct and life. His comments are those of a devout man of wide worldly experience. S. Gregory holds before him as the main purpose of his commentaries, not instruction, but *edification*. The allegorical method which he pursued has been severely criticized, on the ground that almost anything might be deduced from anything by the use of it. But it must be remembered that Gregory's mystical exegesis is held severely in restraint

by the fact that it is always exercised within the limits of the Christian Faith.

Bede applies to Gregory the words, "The blessing of him that was ready to perish came upon me." Certainly most appropriate to his concern for evangelizing England.

"Other popes applied themselves to building or adorning of churches with gold and silver, but Gregory was entirely intent upon gaining souls."[1]

Gregory's prayer that in the heavenly country he might see the fruit of Augustine's labours was partially granted to him here on earth. While in Rome he sat in meditation on the Scriptures there burst from the good man's heart one exultant sentence, full of evangelic zeal and thankfulness: "Behold, the language of Britain, hitherto ignorant of all beyond barbaric sound, now sings to the Divine praise the Hebrew Hallelujah!"[2] Gregory's heart was in England, although he never trod our shore.

Bede also preserves a fragment of one of Gregory's prayers: "And dispose our days in Thy peace, and preserve us from eternal damnation, and rank us in the number of Thy elect, through Christ our Lord."

The social calamities, the barbaric invasions, were to Gregory a cause of incessant anxiety, at times overwhelming. They were so distracting as to force him at times to abandon his Scriptural studies. At other times he wept that his life had been prolonged to see such days. Gregory was convinced that the next generation would endure still worse experiences. He was overwhelmed with sorrow. His health failed him. Constantly afflicted with attacks of gout, during two whole years he could

[1] Bede, "H. E.," II. i. [2] Quoted by Bede, II. i.

only rise for three hours at the most on festivals for the Holy Eucharist, but the effort was rewarded with such excruciating pain that he could not help crying aloud. The pain, he said, was too severe for remedy, yet not severe enough to kill. Daily he seemed driven towards death, and yet daily repelled from it. His prayer was that of the psalmist: "Bring my soul out of prison, that I may give thanks unto Thy Name." From these protracted sufferings Gregory was at last released on March 12, A.D. 604.

The Calendar of the Anglican Church includes the names of several occupants of the Roman See. Above them all in one aspect stands for us Englishmen the name of S. Gregory the Great. For, as the Venerable Bede says, "He is our Apostle."[1] Though he be not an Apostle to others, yet he is to us, for the seal of his Apostleship are we in the Lord.

[1] "H. E.," II. i.

March 18

S. Edward

WHEN Edgar, King of England, died in 975, his widowed queen, Elfrida, was left with two children, Edward, her stepson, a boy of thirteen, and Ethelred, her son, a child of seven. One of these two would naturally succeed to his father's throne. The succession involved in either case a lengthy minority, during which the real power would be with the great nobles of the realm. Therefore the choice of succession became fiercely disputed between rival chiefs. Some for his father's sake sided with Edward, who had been expressly designated by Edgar's approval, and being the elder was the natural heir. But others sided with the widowed queen, who, led by affection rather than by duty, favoured her own child against her stepson's claims. Between these conflicting parties Elfrida might possibly have secured her aim had not S. Dunstan[1] intervened with all the authority of his office and the force of his vigorous personality. Dunstan was clear that the interests of the Kingdom and of the Crown alike supported Edward's claims. And Dunstan's

[1] See May 19.

influence determined the election. The archbishop promptly took Edward and crowned him.

Thus the party of Elfrida were for the moment baffled. But it was for the moment only. Edward's short and troubled reign only extended across four years, during which Elfrida did not cease to covet for her own child what she saw her stepson possess. So long as Edward lived her son was nothing. Whether the suggestion of Edward's murder was her own or that of her party, or both, she never repudiated what secured her desire. The well-known story of Edward's death shows that to the popular mind Elfrida was the embodiment of unscrupulous partiality.

Edward, when hunting one day, came near Corfe Castle, where he ascertained that his stepmother and her son were residing. Overcome with thirst, he turned his horse to the Castle. The thought of danger never crossed his mind. From his simple goodness he assumed that the integrity of others corresponded with his own. Elfrida met him with every expression of welcome, but as he stooped to take from her hand a cup of wine he was stabbed by a dagger. Knowing that he had received a deadly wound, he spurred his horse to rejoin his men, but sank exhausted, dying on the way, traced back in ghastly signs of blood to the door of his stepmother's castle. The heartless Elfrida made no pretence to conceal her joy, and buried the corpse without royal honours at Warham, A.D. 978.

But the heart of the people honoured Edward, and his tomb became a place of universal pilgrimage.[1]

[1] Matt. of Paris, "Chron." (Rolls Series), i. 470.

Edward was popularly regarded as a martyr. He is enrolled in the Calendar as a saint. Popular esteem may have dignified him with the former name, but he did not die in the cause of Religion.

No human power avenged his death; but conscience did its work. The later years of Elfrida were not merely embittered by remorse, but purified by penitence. She laid aside the outward signs of royal dignity, retired from the Court, lived a prayerful and ascetic life, and sought to make what reparation lay within her power by founding religious institutions and houses of prayer.

March 21

S. Benedict

BENEDICT was rightly named, for the name represented his character. Even in youth he showed a wisdom beyond his years. Born of a distinguished house about A.D. 480, in the province of Nursia, at the foot of the Apennines, in what is now the diocese of Spoleto, he went while very young to Rome for the study of literature. But the conditions of Roman student-life so shocked him that, fearing to be drawn into the stream of viciousness, he resolved to retire altogether from life in the world. Thus he abandoned the charm of literature, his father's house, his earthly inheritance, and, with the sole ambition of pleasing God, retreated into poverty and loneliness. Into this retreat his nurse was the only human being who followed him. But Benedict's holy zeal craved for completer solitude. He left the faithful servant, whose devotion to her young master was touching but unrequited, and fled to the neighbourhood of Subiaco, forty miles from Rome. While thus retreating further and further from mankind, a monk named Romanus met him, and Benedict confided to his ear the object of his pursuit. Romanus, full of sympathy, clothed him in the habit of a monk, kept his secret, and

gave him all encouragement and direction. There, amid mountains where the waters gathered into a deep lake, and then discharged themselves into a torrent, Benedict sought in the solitudes of nature communion with God and the mastery of self. So in a narrow cave near Subiaco Benedict lived three years, no human being, Romanus excepted, knowing where he was.

From his monastery, some distance remote, Romanus made it his frequent duty to bring bread to this hermit of the mountains. A huge abyss cut off all access from the monastery to Benedict's cave, and Romanus was therefore obliged to lower the bread by a cord, to which he attached a bell, thereby to warn the solitary that his food was approaching. Some evil-minded being, however, cast a stone and broke the bell; but still Romanus persisted, as well as he could, in his self-imposed ministrations.

Occasional visitors broke in even upon Benedict's seclusion. A saintly priest was warned one Easter-tide to share his meal with the hermit on the mountain. Another time some shepherds found him, so rough and shaggy in his coat of skins, that at first they scarcely thought he could be human. So the name of Benedict was known. But the object of their admiration was beset in that lonely dwelling with thoughts of evil and stormy passions. He threw himself naked among the bushes of thorns, and when he arose, bleeding and lacerated, the wounds of his body had healed the wounds of his soul.

Then Benedict's influence grew. By self-mastery he won the power to become a guide to others. When the abbot of a monastery between Subiaco and Tivoli died, the community invited him to become their superior.

Benedict refused. He frankly told them that he could not endure their practices, and warned them that they would not be able to endure his rule. However, notwithstanding his warnings, they persisted so earnestly in their request that he reluctantly consented. It fell out exactly as he said. Once enthroned as superior, he insisted on absolute obedience to the rule; he allowed no deviations, and the brothers began bitterly to repent their selection. All their efforts fell powerless upon his inflexible will. It is quite possible that the ardent and severely self-disciplined Benedict had not the tact and the patience required to draw the relaxed reins gradually closer. Finding themselves forced into intolerable regularity, and bound with burdens all the harder by contrast with preceding laxity, the brotherhood lost all sense of right and reason, and determined, even by crime, to rid themselves of their iron leader. They mingled poison in the abbot's cup. But Benedict made the sign of the cross, and the cup was shattered. Benedict at once arose with calmest dignity, assembled the community, and said, "May the Almighty pity you, my brethren. Why have you wished to treat me in this way? Did I not tell you we could not live together? Seek for yourselves an abbot after your mind, for you can no longer count on me." And with that he returned to his solitude, and dwelt by himself, no longer torn and distracted by the miserable conflicts of an unspiritual and ignorant community.

To the question—Was it right for Benedict to abandon a charge once undertaken? S. Gregory the Great, his biographer, replies that if the community had contained some, at any rate, to whom the abbot might have done good

service, it would have been wrong to leave them; but a community of unmixed evil had no claim, and could not be profited. And Benedict's departure won him the reverence of the nobler sort who understood his motives. Men sought out his dwelling at Subiaco, and placed themselves under his direction. Numbers increased, until Benedict erected twelve monasteries, each containing twelve brothers under their respective head, only retaining with himself a specially selected few, congenial souls, like-minded, whom he could more perfectly instruct in the life of sacrifice and devotion.

By this time Benedict's work was attracting attention in Rome, and Roman citizens brought their sons to him to train and teach in the fear of God. Chief among these was the youthful S. Maur, Benedict's most beloved disciple.

But the triumphs of grace which rouse the admiration of the good only awaken the envy of the bad. Florentius, priest of a neighbouring church, stirred by mortal jealousy, threw discredit on Benedict's works, and put seductive temptations in his disciples' way, until Benedict, for his younger brethren's sake, felt bound to retreat. Once more, then, Benedict departed. Now, when Florentius heard of it he was standing in the balcony of his house, and danced for joy. That very moment the whole balcony broke and fell to the ground, crushing him into instant death. Then Benedict's disciple Maur followed swiftly after his master, who was already two miles away. "Return," said he, "the enemy is dead." But Benedict wept, both because his enemy had perished and because his disciple was glad. And he imposed a penance on Maur for

want of pity towards an enemy. Onward went the saintly abbot, seeking elsewhere a more suitable habitation. His choice fell on Monte Casino, which he drew forth from obscurity and made one of the most famous in monastic history. The heights of Monte Casino were at that time crowned with an ancient temple of Apollo, the woods were sacred to pagan rites, and round his altars the multitudes still assembled. Benedict did not destroy the temple, but consecrated it to Christian uses, removing the pagan emblems, idols, and altars, and constructing two chapels in it, one of S. Martin and the other of S. John. Meanwhile he constantly preached and instructed in the Faith.

The persuasive eloquence of Benedict succeeded in touching the pagan hearts around him. He was no longer the recluse, but rather the missionary, the apostle, imparting to the throng the lessons gained in solitude.

Whatever rank they held in the world who now assembled under Benedict's direction, they had to live in brotherhood and exact equality at Monte Casino. The son of a magistrate stood by Benedict's table, holding, as was the custom, a lamp for Benedict's use. The young man's heart rebelled against service more suited, he thought, for a slave than for the free. "Who is this man," he reflected, "whom I serve while he feeds, standing lamp in hand, submissive to his orders? and who am I that he treats so like a slave?"

But Benedict did not fail to read his thoughts. "Make the sign of the cross upon your heart, my brother," said Benedict, taking the lamp from him and giving it to another, and sending him away to his cell, humbled with

the reflection that he did not understand the monastic temper, and that his pride was known.

Benedict's heart went with his brothers in their absence from the monastery; and he frequently revealed a knowledge of their conduct and an insight into their character which deepened their admiration and increased his ascendency.

A strange story records how Totila, King of the Goths, heard of Benedict's fame, and being desirous to test the abbot's powers of discrimination, ordered Riggon, his sword-bearer, to impersonate him, and, invested in the royal robes, pay Benedict a visit. But when Riggon entered Benedict's presence the abbot promptly exclaimed, "Lay aside that robe, my son; it is not meant for you!" Riggon, utterly disconcerted, prostrated himself before Benedict, and hastened without a word to depart, and returned crestfallen to his master. Totila determined that the abbot was worth a visit, and went in person to his dwelling. Benedict is said to have predicted the remaining ten years of the king's career.

Severe as Benedict's austerity was, he was no friend to ascetic excesses. Hearing that a hermit had chained himself to the cave where he dwelt, Benedict sent the message, "If you are a servant of God, bind yourself with no chain of iron, but with the chain of Christ."[1] The hermit obeyed.

Benedict's life was cast in troubled times. Son of the proud old Roman aristocracy, with its long annals of supremacy, he had to see his nation at the mercy of rude barbaric insolence; the Goth mastering the Roman, the

[1] "Dial," book iii. 13.

barbarian trampling upon the cultured. It fell to the great man's lot to draw together the conquered and their conquerors, to mitigate where he could the brutality and the violence which must have roused his Roman nature, and needed all his Christianity to treat with prudence and with patience. Galla, a brutal Gothic chief, ill-treated and tortured the country-people in the hope of extorting from them hidden treasures. One victim, in his desperation, having nothing to reveal, declared that Benedict was the keeper of what wealth he had. Galla determined to go in search of Benedict. Mounting his horse, he drove the unhappy victim on foot in front of him, with hands tied behind his back, and a cord round his neck, ordering him to guide him to Benedict's dwelling. At the mountain summit by the monastery door sat the abbot, absorbed in reading. "Get up," shouted the rude Goth, "and pay out this man's money." The man of God said nothing; he calmly surveyed the tyrant and his victim, and as he gazed on the miserable peasant the cords which bound him were loosed, and he was free. A superstitious terror seized on Galla, and he cast himself tamely at Benedict's feet, and asked the saint to pray for him. Benedict called to the brethren of the monastery, bade them ask the Goth into the refectory and give him food. When Galla re-appeared Benedict appealed to the soldier's sense of justice, and so the Goth departed, not even asking what had become of his victim.

Saint Scholastica, the sister of Benedict, like himself a person of extraordinary devotion, was accustomed to visit her brother once a year, and to spend some hours in his companionship in a cottage not far from the monastery.

One year she came as usual, and her brother, with some of his disciples, came to meet her. They spent the day in converse and in devotion; and when the evening shadows lengthened they took their frugal meal together. Scholastica entreated her brother not to depart that night, but to continue until morn their converse on the blessedness of the heavenly life. Benedict refused. Scholastica burst into tears and prayed. Then the clouds came up in sudden masses, and a terrible storm broke across the mountain. Benedict saw that it was impossible to return. "May the Almighty God forgive you, my sister!" exclaimed the saint, "what have you done?" Scholastica answered, "I made my prayer to you, and you refused. I made my prayer to God, and He has answered. Now," she added in triumph, "go and leave me, if you can." So Benedict was forced to remain that night, and those two saintly beings spent its hours in discourse on the life everlasting. There is something in the pathetic beauty of this incident which recalls the last converse between S. Monica and S. Augustine, the mother and son. Here, too, as might almost be anticipated, that meeting of Scholastica with Benedict was the last this world would give them. For in the morning the brother returned to his monastic dwelling, and in three days the sister had departed into that life everlasting of which she had held sweet converse.

Benedict, in his cell at prayer, gazed upward into the blue heavens. There flew a dove. To the saint's view it was his sister's soul winging flight into the blessedness which cannot be invaded by sorrow. The lonely monk sang aloud his hymn of praise. The body of Scholastica was brought to Benedict's convent, and laid in the grave which he had

prepared for himself. There, too, he himself was afterwards buried. Scholastica's prayer still took effect. In their death they were not divided.

Benedict's end came rapidly. He had a clear presentiment of his death. Six days before he died he bade them open his grave. On the sixth day he was carried, at his request, into the chapel, received the Blessed Sacrament, and, resting in the arms of his brethren, his eyes fixed on heaven, his lips to the last moment murmuring words of prayer, he expired.[1] His age was sixty-three. He was buried in the Chapel of S. John the Baptist, constructed by himself on the spot where the altar of Apollo formerly stood.

Benedict's amazing practical sagacity is shown in his Monastic Rule, which strongly commended itself to such men as Gregory the Great, and has borne the test of thirteen hundred years. The Rule is Benedict's only writing; the Benedictine Order his memorial. What words can adequately describe the mighty influence which imposed a constitution on Western monasticism, and determined its general characteristics to the present day? The Benedictine Rule contrasted with the monastic rules of the East, is milder and more practical in spirit. By giving encouragement to study, it opened the way for the development of that great and learned Order to whose massive knowledge and monumental labours the world owes obligations which it never can repay.

[1] A.D. 543.

April 3

S. Richard

RICHARD was born at Droitwich, in the year 1197, where his father was an owner of land. The family affairs were anything but prosperous, and Richard for some years served his elder brother, to whom the property descended, following the plough and working in the fields—an occupation very different from that which was the bent of his mind. The elder brother offered him the succession to the estate, but the heart of Richard was fixed upon a different ideal. He declined the proposal, and departed for a life of study. He drew in his first inspiration and ideals in the University of Oxford, from which he found his way, poor though he was, to the city which was then a still more illustrious home of learning—the University of Paris. Poverty was common among the throngs of University students in those days; and it is told of Richard, that he and two friends had only one tunic between them, so they were compelled to take it in turns to appear in the streets. Their fare was of the simplest kind. They could not afford meat or even fish except on the Lord's day or great festivals, or when occasionally visited by their friends. But if their life was one of

strictest poverty, it was thoroughly contented and happy. For the great object of Richard's desire was being achieved: he was laying the foundations of future learning.

In course of time the student returned to Oxford, where for a while he became a teacher. But once more his thirst for learning led him across the sea. For seven years he studied Canon Law in the famous University of Bologna, where he sometimes lectured in his master's place. Once again Richard returned to Oxford, his first guide in the paths of learning, no longer the poor and unlearned applicant, but the distinguished student fresh from the teaching of Paris and Bologna.

But Oxford was not to be Richard's lasting home. Two eminent men both determined to draw him into the active service of the Church. The saintly Edmund Archbishop of Canterbury, and Grosseteste the vigorous and dauntless champion of Lincoln, appreciated Richard's learning and administrative power, and both independently invited him to become their chancellor. Confronted with two such invitations simultaneously from two such men, Richard could scarcely avoid accepting what he neither sought nor desired. He therefore became the archbishop's chancellor.

The influence of Edmund was very important in maturing Richard's character; and the legal learning of Richard was invaluable to Edmund. The archbishop and his chancellor became the closest, most intimate friends. Edmund relied much on his adviser's sagacity, while Richard venerated his superior's piety.

Edmund sorely needed support both in his conflicts with the king, who left ecclesiastical offices vacant and

reaped the revenues, and in his conflicts with the Pope, who thrust foreign priests into English benefices. These struggles were a sore burden to one of Edmund's temper; for the archbishop was not a man of action. There are those whom conflict braces and invigorates, but Edmund was easily desponding and depressed. "He was fitted rather to be a victim than a champion."[1] And when at last he resolved to leave the unequal strife, and retired to France, preferring exile to submission, Richard the Chancellor was the faithful companion and solace of his wanderings.

From this duty Edmund's death in 1240 released him. After witnessing his master's burial at Pontigny, Richard, evidently through the force of Edmund's guidance and example, resolved to devote himself to the study of theology. He therefore retired to the Dominican priory at Orleans, where in course of time he became a priest. But once more Richard was called forth from studious calm into the world's noisy activities. Boniface, the newly elected Archbishop of Canterbury (1244), resolved that his predecessor's chancellor should be his own. But Richard was soon to hold an office far more spiritual. At this moment the bishopric of Chichester fell vacant, and the king endeavoured to secure from the subservient cathedral chapter the election of his favourite, Robert Passelew, manager of the royal forests, an unscrupulous lawyer, and an excellent man of business. His shrewdness had enriched the king, who accordingly wished to reward him with a bishopric. The chapter of Chichester elected him. Nothing was needed but the archbishop's sanction.

[1] Stubbs, "Constit. Hist.," ii. 61.

But the archbishop opposed the king. Boniface sent Passelew to be examined in theology by Grosseteste of Lincoln, who pronounced him incompetent, whereupon the archbishop rejected him. The chapter were bidden to proceed to a new election. Their choice this time fell upon the chancellor Richard.[1] King Henry was furious. He appealed from the archbishop to the Pope. He confiscated the revenues of the see of Chichester. He refused audience to the newly elected candidate. Whereupon Richard promptly crossed the Channel, and sought an interview with Pope Innocent.

Innocent, a refugee from Italian violence, was presiding over the great Council of the Church in Lyons. He received Richard, and himself conferred consecration upon him. After visiting the tomb of his master, S. Edmund, at Pontigny, the new bishop returned to England. He presented the papal letters to the king; but Henry ignored the letters and retained the revenues.

The Bishop of Chichester was reduced to the greatest poverty. He went a homeless wanderer through his own diocese, depending upon hospitality which few had the courage to offer, but yet discharging the spiritual duties of his office notwithstanding royal disapproval. One name stood out illustrious in the diocese, that of Symon de Teringe, fearless among the fearful, a man who loved his spiritual superior more than he feared his king, and who boldly invited the bishop to his house, in spite of all disfavour. The bishop made periodical visits to the Court to claim his revenues, but was only insulted. How dared he come, retorted a royal marshal, knowing the king's

[1] A.D. 1245.

anger? Richard meekly left the palace without reply, and waited with the crowd outside. But after two years peremptory letters from the Pope induced the king to change his mind, and at last he restored reluctantly what he had unjustly withheld.

Once in possession of the revenues of his see, the bishop was lavish in charities. His steward remonstrated. "Is it right, my dear brother," answered Richard, "that we should eat and drink off silver and gold, while Christ in the persons of His poor, is starving?" So he sold his plate and his horse.

Well knowing what poverty meant, the bishop founded a home for poor aged priests, who, although blind or infirm, had often hitherto been reduced to public beggary.

Richard was firm and vigorous in maintaining justice and right. The townsmen of Lewes had invaded the right of sanctuary, and dragged thence a robber who fled thither for refuge, and hanged him. The bishop compelled them to bear the decomposing corpse upon their shoulders back to the church whence they dragged him. And he ordered those who instigated the act to be flogged, half naked, through the streets of the town.

The right of sanctuary was an obvious protection against violence in lawless times, and its maintenance was a moral gain.

There was another privilege exercised by Richard which enabled him, at times, to overrule the inflexible decisions of legal justice by higher principles of moral right. It is the power now exercised by the Crown of pardoning where the law condemns. Richard found a woman in prison, condemned to death, execution being delayed until the

birth of her child. The spirit of the law had said, "Let there be no man to pity nor to have compassion upon the motherless children." But the Christian bishop thought otherwise. The spirit of compassion came upon him, and he opened the prison doors and set her free to take refuge in the sanctuary, and to repent and live. But the bishop's steward came into the house that day, vexed and angered. Richard inquired the cause. "Cause enough," echoed the steward; "for we must pay the king a fine of a hundred silver pieces for this day's work." But Richard answered, "What is that to the freedom of one enslaved? Blessed be the Almighty, Who has set her free."

The statutes of S. Richard for the better governing of his diocese[1] remain to this day attesting his earnest care for reverence and Christian duty.[2] He permitted no priest to celebrate in soiled or shabby vestments. The chalice must be of either silver or gold. The corporal must be spotlessly pure, and two palls at least must be upon the altar. The priest must have a cross before him when he celebrates. The bread must be of the purest wheat, the wine mingled with a very little water. The ablutions of the first celebration are to be reserved until after the second, and then consumed by the priest, unless they are consumed by the server after the former celebration. The Eucharist was never to be reserved longer than seven days, but renewed every Lord's day, and kept locked up, and reverently taken to the sick.

S. Richard was also anxious that laymen should at the least be present at the celebration of the Divine Mysteries, every saint's day and every great festival. He feared

[1] A.D. 1246. [2] Wilkins, "Concilia," i. 688.

that their continual absence would result in a still further alienation from spiritual things.[1]

S. Richard was also deeply in earnest for the further instruction of the clergy, whose ignorance would seem to have been deplorable. They were to be taught to know and to understand the words of the Canon and of Baptism. The words of consecration were to be read *rotunde et distincte.* They were not to be cut short by rapidity, not to suffer from syncope.[2]

S. Richard found himself obliged to forbid his clergy to imitate laymen in their dress. Some assumed a military fashion, and looked more like soldiers than priests, giving serious offence to the more thoughtful laymen.[3]

Those who violated the rights of Churches, deprived the poor of their dues, delayed the appointment to vacant Churches, came under sentence of excommunication from the Bishop of Chichester, who had the names of the excommunicated read out four times a year, at the solemn feast, in church. And Richard assuredly had the conscience of the people with him when he exercised this tremendous power. Like S. Hugh of Lincoln, to whom he bears at times resemblance, he was fearlessly inflexible to influence, however exalted, when exercised in behalf of unworthy persons. The king was eager to obtain preferment for an unworthy cleric in the diocese of Chichester, and managed to secure the archbishop's support. But Richard was immovable. "A man who does such things shall never with my consent have the care of souls in my diocese. Let the archbishop act according to the account which he will have to make one day at the judgment-seat

[1] Wilkins, "Concilia," i 693. [2] Ibid., i. 691. [3] Ibid., i. 692.

of the Most High." Richard's firmness prevailed. The archbishop dropped the matter, and the king found that nothing could be done.

Richard's episcopate lasted only nine years, and he died at the age of fifty-six. In the last few months of his life he preached, at the Pope's request, a Crusade. But Richard was here engaged in a hopeless cause. No influence and no persuasiveness could kindle zeal for the Pope's command. Richard's work met with scarcely any response. "The extortions and deceptions of the Roman Curia," says Matthew of Paris, "were the cause." The king took a solemn oath to join in the Crusades, but previous experience of his conduct did not conduce to confidence in his asseverations. "The constant intrusion of foreigners into the richest livings, the ceaseless disputes between the Crown and the chapters over the elections to bishoprics, the steady flow of appeals to Rome, and the equally steady rise in the judicial pretensions of the Curia, produced a feeling of irritation in all classes, which can scarcely be overstated." [1]

But Richard's labours were almost ended. He reached as far as Dover in his weary and unproductive efforts for the Crusade. At Dover he had the joy of consecrating a church in memory of his patron and friend, S. Edmund of Canterbury, and then his last illness came upon him. It was mid-Lent of the year 1253. Richard entered the church to join in the Holy Sacrifice, but fainted during service in the choir. On his recovering consciousness they gave him a crucifix, which he held in his hands, and kissed with deepest venerating love the sacred

[1] Stubbs, "Constit. Hist.," ii. 60.

Wounds. This was on March 31st; on April 2nd he died. When the body was prepared for burial, the marks of severe self-discipline were found. It was covered with sackcloth, and bound with an iron chain.

Richard was buried in the Cathedral of Chichester, in accordance with his own directions.

April 4

S. Ambrose

IN the garden of his official residence, in one of the chief French cities, sat the Prefect of France, watching the slumber of his infant son. As he watched, a dark swarm of clustering bees descended on the cradle, completely covering the sleeping child. The Prefect, fearing that the child would be stung to death, dared not disturb them. After an interval of suspense the cloud lifted and flew away. Fear being exchanged for gladness, the father at once determined that the child was evidently destined for a distinguished career. Thus the little Ambrose made his first impression on the world. Ambrose was the youngest of three children. His sister, Marcellina, evinced from early days a strong propensity towards the religious life, and gladly embraced it with all her heart. Her character did much to guide Ambrose, who looked up to her with admiration. Satyrus, the brother, a highly attractive boy, graced with a singularly amiable disposition, so closely resembled Ambrose in feature that the one was often mistaken for the other.

They were born of a distinguished house, Italian by descent, Rome itself being the head-quarters of their

family. But the noblest part of their inheritance was their Christian Faith. The family of Ambrose were no novices in the Christian religion; their house had long ago embraced the Faith, and had its martyrs during the fearful days of Diocletian; and the fact that they had contributed of their own flesh and blood to the noble army of martyrs had no little influence on the earnestness and zeal of the present generation.

Ambrose's father died when the youngest boy was about ten years old.[1] The official residence had to be vacated, and the widow, with her three children, settled in Rome. Here Ambrose was most carefully educated, although no one purposed to train him for priestly work; the aim of life which was set before him being eminence in some secular profession like that of his father. He studied Greek and Roman literature, and his love of both is manifest throughout his entire career, for in the writings of his maturer years he quotes with a readiness and frequency which attest considerable familiarity with the literature of both these nations.

The Roman bishop, either Julius or possibly the unfortunate Liberius, who set his signature to a heretical creed, and who was consecrated when Ambrose was twelve, seems to have been a visitor to the prefect's family.[2] The boy Ambrose watched his mother and sister kiss the bishop's hand, and after the visitor was gone offered them in fun his own hand to kiss, saying that he should be a bishop one day, a statement which was naturally disregarded as the expression of boyish thoughtlessness and exuberant high spirits, but was not forgotten at a later period.

[1] A.D. 350.

[2] Liberius, A.D. 352.

This incident, almost the only relic of Ambrose's early life, may be taken to indicate that there was little to distinguish Ambrose's development from that of other bright and intelligent children. There is a healthy absence of the exaggerated. There is no effort to see in Ambrose an infant prodigy or to attribute to the days of youth religious experiences belonging to a maturer age. Yet Ambrose was distinctly gifted, and gave great promise which subsequent events endorsed. He was educated for the law, and in course of time took his place as a pleader in the Roman bar. Here he attracted the notice of Probus, the prefect, who occupied in Rome a somewhat similar, but far more exalted, position than that which Ambrose's father had held in France. Probus marked the young man's abilities, and determining to give him full scope for their exercise, invested him with the insignia of the magistrate, and sent him as governor over the Italian province of Liguria. Probus's parting words of advice to the young magistrate have been often since repeated as prophetic. "Go," he said, "and be their bishop rather than their judge."[1]

The principal city of the province was Milan, ever after to be associated with Ambrose's name. Milan was a city of great importance as one of the imperial residences, more frequented as Rome became more deserted. And here, at the age of thirty-three, Ambrose the magistrate fixed his head-quarters.[2]

The affairs of the Church at Milan were in a desperate state. For twenty years Bishop Auxentius had ruled the Catholic Communion without accepting the Catholic Faith.

[1] Paulinus. [2] A.D. 373.

On the central doctrine of our Lord's Divinity Auxentius had made shipwreck, and while embracing the Arian heresy still continued to occupy his place in the Church. The results at Milan had been disastrous. Two parties existed, those who in spite of their heretical chief pastor, clung to the apostolic conviction, and those who adopted the Arian denial.

Ambrose had been in office about a year when Auxentius died.[1] It was a critical moment for the right faith. Both parties, Catholic and Arian, struggled fiercely to elect a bishop who should forward their respective opinions. The bishops of the province gathered in Milan, where Valentinian, the Emperor, summoned them to his presence, entreating them to appoint to the see a bishop whom he could sincerely reverence.

The bishops, anxious to please the Emperor and to escape a perilous duty, requested Valentinian to make his own selection. Valentinian prudently declined, adding that the election of a bishop rested more appropriately in episcopal hands. Accordingly, though with considerable reluctance, the bishops left the imperial presence, and proceeded to the difficult task of election.

Assembled in the great church, the Synod attempted to deliberate, but the strong party feeling of the city invaded the council chamber, and rendered calm decisions impossible. The election of the new bishop threatened the public peace, and Ambrose, in his official capacity as magistrate, was bound to appear in the church to overawe the contending parties into something like order. Then, in the moment of unexpected quiet which followed upon

[1] A.D. 374.

the magistrate's entrance, a child's voice was heard in church, exclaiming, "Ambrose bishop! Ambrose bishop!" And, to Ambrose's astonishment and dismay, the proposal met with instant acceptance. Arian and Catholic vied with each other in the eagerness to place the popular magistrate on the episcopal throne.

But Ambrose shrank away in fear, unable to answer them, and made many efforts to escape the burden which general approval sought to lay upon him. Seated in his official Court, he ordered some prisoners to be tried before him, and, quite contrary to his usually mild and merciful rule, gave orders that torture should be applied to them. By this act of unwonted severity he hoped to avert the popular approval, and convince them of his unfitness for the service of the Church. But the people saw through the "pious fraud," and crying, "Thy sins be upon our shoulders," persisted in demanding him as their bishop.[1] Ambrose fled. But the people appealed to Valentinian, and the reluctant magistrate was led back in triumph.

Valentinian delighted in the people's selection, "for he knew that Ambrose's judgment was straight and true as the rule of the carpenter, and his sentence more exact than the beam of the balance."[2]

But Ambrose was not yet baptized. If the Arian section had doubted upon which side Ambrose would be found, his first act must have scattered every hope; for he insisted that he would not receive the Sacrament from the hands of any but a Catholic bishop.

Ambrose was then baptized. He is said to have been

[1] Paulinus.

[2] Theodoret, "Hist.," book iv.

admitted to the minor orders of the Church, and on the octave after his Baptism to have received his consecration to the Episcopate.[1]

Placed suddenly without warning upon a height of spiritual responsibility to which his antecedents formed no fitting prelude, destitute of experience in religious affairs, without theological training, Ambrose was keenly alive to the solemnity, the awful peril of his office. He had exchanged the magistrate's chair for the Christian pulpit, the weapons of the law for the pastoral staff. He must be henceforth the exponent of another code of morals, appealing to other sanctions than those of secular force and compulsion. In the strangeness of the transition from secular to spiritual duties he must have been largely comforted and strengthened by the reflection that he was there of the people's choice, and not by his own ambition; by the grace of God, and not by his own strength.

Frequently in after-life Ambrose dwelt upon the strangeness of the way in which he was drawn unwillingly to the service of the Church. "Much was forgiven me," he said, "when I was called from the din of the world's disputes and the parade of public administration to the priesthood of the Church of God. And for that very reason I ought to fear lest I become ungrateful. Greatly forgiven, I should greatly love. It might be truly said," reflected Ambrose, "'this man, although never ecclesiastically trained nor disciplined from his boyhood, was torn from the tribunal of the secular courts, from the vanities of the world, from the offices of the law to the singing of psalms. He is in the priesthood by no strength of his

[1] Paulinus.

own, but by the grace of Christ.' Keep then, O my Lord, Thy gift; keep Thy gift which Thou didst grant to him who fled away. I know that I was not fit to be among the clergy, for I had given myself to the world. But by Thy grace I am what I am. I am the least among all Thy bishops. I have no moral worth. Yet since Thou hast laid even upon me some labour for Thy Holy Church, keep this Thy gift, lest that lost one whom Thou didst call to be a priest should in the very priesthood perish."

Conscious of his defective training, one of the new bishop's first acts was to secure a priest of the Roman Church, the pious, learned, and exemplary Simplician, to be alike his spiritual adviser and his instructor in theology. Under Simplician's able and careful tuition Ambrose soon obtained a wider knowledge of the Church's doctrines, and a clear insight into the principal heretical tendencies of the age. Simplician was invaluable to Ambrose; his superior age and experience, together with his real knowledge of Catholic principle and his high priestly ideal, formed exactly the balancing and correcting influence most necessary to Ambrose after his life in the ordinary world. No doubt much of Ambrose's own lofty standard of the priesthood which he afterwards set before his own clergy was due to Simplician's influence. The young archbishop loved him as a father, and when Ambrose died Simplician succeeded his former pupil in the episcopal cares.

Another of the new bishop's acts immediately on his consecration was to devote his entire property, which was large, to the Church and to the poor, reserving only for

his sister Marcellina a life interest in the produce of the land.

The influence of Marcellina, the result of his early training, and the bent of his own mind all alike led Ambrose to regard with deep reverence the monastic life. Communities of women devoted to the religious life were what he desired to see in his diocese, as elsewhere in Christendom; and he would often preach on the vocation to this form of self-denial. With a considerable section of the Milanese the bishop's addresses on this subject, although admittedly powerful, were distinctly unpopular. Mothers would not let their daughters come to hear Ambrose preach, lest his influence should lead them to consecrate themselves altogether to the service of religion. Men strongly objected, and made no secret of their repugnance to preaching which upheld the convent as an ideal for many women.[1] But despite the remonstrances alike of mothers and lovers, the religious movement which Jerome made extensive in Rome prospered also in Milan under the bishop's guidance. He bade the daughters of his city not to be discouraged nor diverted from their purpose of self-dedication by parental unwillingness. They must wait and hope, and ultimately the way would be open to them. If it must needs be so, God would compensate them for the forfeiture of their inheritance.[2]

Ambrose was a profound believer in the spiritual advantages of solitary reflection. He delighted in the hours of study and meditation, and it was during those uninterrupted hours, far on into the night, that much of his

[1] Bened., "Life." Cf. "De Virginibus," book i.
[2] Bened., "Life."

literary work was written. "Solitary meditation," taught Ambrose, "was invaluable to the development of the higher spiritual faculties. Mary was alone when the angel visited her. She was alone when the Holy Spirit descended upon her and the power of the Highest overshadowed her. Peter was alone when he was permitted to grasp the universality of the gospel.[1] The lonely reading of Holy Scripture is to meet God really in Paradise in the cool of the day. And," Ambrose does not shrink from adding, "Jesus Christ was alone when He redeemed the world." [2]

And those nights much given to study came between laborious days. The day was given to the cares of the Church and to the needs of individual souls. Men would enter unannounced, and find the solitary student reading in the pages of some Greek Father, in Origen or S. Basil; for Ambrose was a lover of Greek, and, unlike S. Augustine, who seriously neglected that study when a boy and never completely mastered it as a man, Ambrose continually quotes the original Greek words in a way which points to habitual familiarity with them.

And Ambrose would be sometimes so absorbed in meditation as not to be aware of his visitors' approach. One, at any rate, now known everywhere in Christendom, entered Ambrose's study, stood long unnoticed without venturing to make his presence observed, gazed silently on the student, and as silently withdrew.[3]

Thus Ambrose worked laboriously to remedy the defective training of his earlier life. Never was transfiguration more complete. Ambrose is thoroughly, every inch of

[1] Acts x. 10. [2] Bened., "Life," p. 1154.
[3] See August 28, S. Augustine.

him, a priest. The worldly ideals were utterly effaced. Onward from his consecration never did man live more thoroughly absorbed in and concentrated upon one single aim than the young Archbishop of Milan. In perfect simplicity Ambrose went about the streets of the city where once he was chief magistrate, divested of any parade, humble among the humblest.

The family of Ambrose gives us delightful pictures of affection based on faith. The sister Marcellina and her two brothers were wrapped up in each other's well-being. Marcellina, although herself in a religious community, must needs come to Milan to be as near as possible to her brother the archbishop. And Satyrus, after achieving considerable success in the Courts at Rome, and being promoted for his brilliant pleading to the charge of a province, could not do without Ambrose, but came to Milan to take charge of his brother's house, to manage his secular affairs, and thus set him free for entire concentration upon the spiritual duties of his work. The death of Satyrus after a few years' life at Milan was one of Ambrose's severest griefs, and one of his most touching utterances is the funeral oration which he pronounced over his dead.

One special feature of Ambrose's life was that he was called to be a fearless, uncompromising teacher of kings. One after another all the crowned heads of the empire are confronted with the great Bishop of Milan, and more or less influenced by him. It was November, A.D. 375, when Valentinian the First died, leaving the cares of empire upon Gratian, his son, at the age of seventeen, who, with his half-brother, Valentinian the Younger, aged four,

was left to the charge of the widowed Empress Justina. Justina had been an Arian at heart all her days, but she concealed the fact from public notice so long as her husband lived. She had no sympathy with her stepson Gratian's faith, and viewed S. Ambrose's influence over him with strong dislike. But Gratian regarded Ambrose with filial reverence and love; and one of the archbishop's greatest writings, that concerning Faith, was composed for the youthful Emperor's use to counteract the mother's heretical influence, and keep him firm in the Catholic Religion. In this work S. Ambrose reminded Gratian of the words, "being the brightness of His glory, and the express image of His Person." Here the Son's eternal co-existence with the Father was manifestly asserted; for from the moment that the Father's glory existed the brightness of that glory existed too. Thus Ambrose laboured to instruct his sovereign in the Catholic Faith; and his labours were rewarded. The young Emperor, notwithstanding his mother's Arian predilections, never swerved from the convictions of the Church which the archbishop so earnestly impressed upon him.

The thrones, both of the East and West, were in that period very much at the disposal of the army; popularity with the soldiers meant safety, while to be unpopular was to be altogether insecure. Usurpers at every hand were ready to take advantage of weakness, and pretenders to the throne were easily crowned. Gratian before long lost his popularity, was deserted by the strength of his soldiers, and was slain, after a reign of seven years. One of the last words he uttered was the archbishop's name. The death of Gratian was a terrible blow to Ambrose. It

meant more than the loss of a disciple and a friend; it imperilled the whole future of the Church. For while Gratian was a Catholic, his successor was not. The Empress Justina, with her son Valentinian the Second, a boy of eleven, now determined publicly to advocate the Arian cause. But for the moment she could think of nothing except her safety. The usurper Maximus was advancing, and the life of her child was insecure. In her distress the Empress turned to the Archbishop of Milan, and placed herself and her son under his protection. And Ambrose found himself compelled to exchange his spiritual duties for the difficult and dangerous office of ambassador to the usurper Maximus. Ambrose was so far successful that he obtained a breathing space, during which Justina found time to appeal to the Emperor Theodosius in the East.

This critical period of insecurity and weak administration was selected by the Pagans at Rome as a favourable time to urge that the altar and image of their goddess Victory should be restored to the place in the Senate from which Gratian's order had removed them. Their appeal might very possibly have succeeded but for the determined resistance of S. Ambrose, who wrote to the young Valentinian, expressing his astonishment that the Emperor could suppose that erection of altars to pagan divinities, and providing means for their worship, could be reconciled with the character of a Christian. "If he yields to the pagan he will have the Church to reckon with. If he consults for the welfare of heathenism against Christianity he may come to the cathedral if he pleases, but it will be to find the bishop absent, or, if present, resisting. The

altar of Christ will reject the offerings of one who erects an altar to an idol."

This very strong letter took effect, and, notwithstanding that the pagan section left their cause in the hands of Symmachus, their most gifted and eloquent pleader, he was powerless against the Archbishop of Milan. One reason of his failure is not difficult to see. There is culture, eloquence, imitation of the best classic models on the side of Symmachus, but there is no moral force, no intensity of faith, no living conviction. Ambrose is no match for the cultured prefect in beauty and finish of style, but there is a living fire of moral earnestness burning through the simplicity of his speech, which sealed the fate of that pagan altar of Victory. No emblem of pagan worship appeared in the Senate again.

But a deeper struggle between the Empress and the archbishop was yet to come. Justina could not advocate the pagan cause, except for reasons of state; what she had at heart was the Arian denial of the Lord's Divinity. And it was upon that ground that the Church and the State met in fiercest conflict. At the beginning of Lent, A.D. 385, she sent an order to the archbishop, commanding him to surrender a church in the vicinity of Milan for Arian worship. Ambrose went to the palace, and firmly refused. Justina endeavoured to force her will upon the resolute priest, but in vain. The roar of the crowd thronging the avenues of approach, and pressing into the courtyard of the palace itself, apprehensive of some danger to their beloved archbishop, and clamouring for his reappearance, was heard by the Empress within. Justina and the court were paralyzed. They bade him calm the people. Ambrose

reappeared before the crowd, assured them of his safety; the tumult subsided, and the archbishop returned quietly home. But the struggle was only begun. Again and again Justina pressed him with arguments, messages, and threats. The city was on the verge of rebellion. Ambrose remained in the cathedral; popular affection stood as an impenetrable safeguard between him and the angry Empress. Then he ventured on the boldest step of all. He gave the soldiers to understand that if they opposed the Church he would not admit them to communion. And the imperial guards in a body submitted to Ambrose's will.

Meanwhile they sang in the church the psalm, "O God, the heathen are come into Thine inheritance." [1]

Hour after hour the faithful Milanese guarded their bishop in the church day and night. They sang alternate verses of the psalms, a practice introduced for the first time, to occupy the tedious days of suspense. Sometimes Ambrose addressed them, sometimes they read from the Holy Scriptures. They sang hymns to the Holy Trinity for Whose worship the sanctuary had been built, and thus in the simple language of the hymns the great doctrine of the Divine Nature and Persons sank into the hearts of the people.

With this century begins the long line of writers of sacred poetry and hymns. S. Ambrose is one of the greatest of the early hymn-writers. His style is very simple, and he does not exhibit the marvellous grace and command of rhythm which is characteristic of the later hymn-writers. His hymns are, on the other hand, entirely free from the legendary elements which render so many mediæval poems

[1] Ps. lxxix.

impossible for modern popular use. They are simple poems in the praise of God, dealing briefly with the Incarnation, the Redemption, the Holy Trinity. They are very few in number, only twelve being ascribed to him with any certainty. They were very much valued by the Church during Ambrose's lifetime, and one of them is still sung by us—

"Th' eternal gifts of Christ the King." [1]

Another hymn of Ambrose's, still simpler and far less known, is the following:—

"Light of the Holy Trinity,
And source of love and unity,
Earth's noontide glory fades away,
Be Thou our light, our hope, our day.

"At morn to Thee our hymns we raise,
And Thee at eventide we praise.
Thy glory be it ours to sing
Eternally, our Lord and King." [2]

Meanwhile, Maximus the Usurper had completed his preparations and advanced into Italy, and the Emperor Justinian fled into the empire of the East to seek the protection of Theodosius. Theodosius told the fugitive Emperor in the plainest terms that the misfortunes of his house were a Nemesis for the wrongs inflicted by him upon the Catholic Church. Whatever were the imperfections of Theodosius, he was beyond all question a deeply religious man. It was with a firm belief that he was under Divine guidance that he went against Maximus and overthrew him.

At Milan Theodosius and Ambrose met, and, like the other leading personages of the age, Theodosius came under the spell of the archbishop's influence.

[1] Hymns A. & M., 430.

[2] S. Ambrose, Hymn xi.

He was a man of genuine religion, but hasty, impulsive, passionate in temper. When he ascended the throne he carried his vehement temper with him. There it sometimes proved a terrible scourge, driving him through want of self-control into acts which no one in sober moments regretted more sincerely than himself. Theodosius held Ambrose in deep veneration for his personal courage and consistent character and real greatness. Ambrose held Theodosius in affectionate esteem, but he never permitted the Emperor's high position to blind him to the grave defects in the imperial character. It happened that during a riot in Thessalonica the magistrates had been mobbed, dragged through the streets, stoned, and murdered. Theodosius' anger was boundless. In a moment of savage fury he retaliated by ordering a general massacre. His soldiers gathered the citizens together, and fell upon the unarmed masses; young and old, innocent and guilty indiscriminately, were mingled together in a dreadful slaughter. The order of Theodosius had been a day of blood, and as the news of his arbitrary cruel and revengeful act flew about from city to city, it came at length to the Archbishop's ears at Milan. Ambrose was beyond measure horrified. He instantly warned the Emperor that he could on no account allow him to enter the Church. Theodosius, apparently thinking that Ambrose could not possibly venture to oppose him, presented himself at the cathedral gates. There the archbishop met him, and in terms of most dignified remonstrance forbad the Emperor's approach.

"Your highness surely cannot have realized the horror of this grave event. Now that the passionate impulse is past, does not reflection suggest the magnitude of the

crime? Possession of power may for a moment have concealed from you the truth, but surely the calm light of reason makes self-deception impossible. Your subjects are men of the same nature with yourself. They have the same Lord, and the same King, and the same Creator, every one of them. How, then, will you venture to approach the church of your common Lord? How will you dare to tread the pavement of this Holy Place? The blood of man is not yet dry upon your hands. How will you extend them towards the stainless Body of our Lord? how receive the chalice of His most precious Blood?—you, whose unchecked passions have, against all justice and all right, flooded a city's streets with human blood! Depart, therefore. Add no further to your guilt. The sentence decreed against you on earth is sealed in heaven. May the Almighty turn it to the good of your soul."[1]

Theodosius quailed. His accompanying officers had in all probability never before seen the imperial will resolutely opposed. Few bolder words are found in all history than this brave resistance of a defenceless priest, speaking in behalf of righteousness against the master of the Roman legions. But moral authority is, after all, greater in the world than material force.

The Emperor attempted some defence. But Ambrose felt it a public duty to protest against the cruel order. "I dare not offer the Sacrifice," he said, "if you remain."[2]

Surely, expostulated Theodosius, other men had sinned as grievously. And he ventured to quote the example of David.

The archbishop's reply was as conclusive as concise.

[1] Anon., "Life of S. Ambrose." [2] Ibid.

"If you are like David in sin, be like him in repentance also."

Theodosius turned away.[1] Trained from childhood in Christian principles, he was well aware that the priest was right. Ambrose had but exercised a just authority. Emperor though he was, Theodosius acknowledged the spiritual power, whose prerogatives he dared not invade. Practically excommunicate, he mournfully retraced his steps to the palace, amid, it may well be believed, the astonishment of his officers and the respect of the crowd. There, for eight months, with every outward token of grief, the repentant ruler of the civilized world sat apart, excluded from all participation in the Sacraments and the worship of the Church. At last Christmas arrived. Theodosius could endure his exclusion no longer. Rufinus, the Chamberlain, found his master on the great festival in tears. On inquiring the cause, Theodosius bewailed his unhappy lot. The House of God was open to beggars and to slaves; accessible to the meanest among his subjects, but he, their chief, was excluded. He was excluded from the church and from forgiveness. And he repeated the solemn words, "Whatsoever ye shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven."

Rufinus immediately communicated his master's words to the archbishop. During the past eight months Ambrose had endeavoured by writing to move his royal master to a genuine grief for sin. Ambrose now relented. Once more the Emperor stood before the cathedral gates, earnestly desiring forgiveness and readmission. The archbishop replied that signs of repentance were necessary for

[1] Anon., "Life of S. Ambrose."

reconciliation with the Church and with God. Theodosius, with deep humility, answered that it was the priest's office to assign him penance.

Ambrose counselled him with the utmost wisdom. Since all this misery came from the immediate fulfilment of an order given under influence of passion, the archbishop advised the Emperor to pass a law deferring the execution of all severe sentences for thirty days after they were pronounced. Passionate impulses might fairly have died away in the course of such delay, and more reasonable counsels might be expected to prevail. Theodosius at once consented to act upon this beneficent advice, whereupon S. Ambrose absolved him.

Then the Emperor stripped himself of all insignia of rank,[1] ascended the sanctuary steps, and threw himself in deepest self-abasement upon the pavement of the Holy Place, exclaiming in the words of David—

> "My soul cleaveth unto the dust:
> Quicken Thou me according to Thy Word!"[2]

An old historian, recounting this event, pauses here, hardly knowing which of the two he ought most to admire, whether the soldier or the priest—the courageous freedom of the one, the noble obedience of the other, the great qualities of both alike; the moral enthusiasm, the perfectly unselfish risk of life for the value of moral truth on the one hand, the genuine sincerity and good faith on the other. And he is not the only one who has paused with deep admiration before the figures of Ambrose and Theodosius.

[1] Anon., "Life."

[2] Ps. cxix. 25.

In his own capital of Constantinople the subservient prelates had treated the Emperor with a deference which exaggerated the secular authority at the cost of the spiritual. He was not likely to receive such deference in Milan. When he attended the cathedral service he entered within the sanctuary rails. The archbishop sent a deacon to inquire the meaning of this unusual act. Theodosius explained that he was following the practice of Constantinople. Ambrose sent a message requesting the Emperor to withdraw, and to take up his position at the head of the laity. Theodosius did so, and was not offended at the priest's boldness. On his return to Constantinople he paid a singular tribute to Ambrose's suggestion by introducing in his own capital the practice of the West; and when his courtly prelates deprecated such needless humility he replied that since he had visited Italy he had met with a bishop indeed, who had taught him what his own clergy had neglected to explain.

Theodosius replaced the young Valentinian on his throne of the West, and returned to his own dominions in the East. Meanwhile Justina died, and the barrier between Ambrose and Valentinian was removed. The young Emperor showed himself a Catholic at heart, and daily came to value and reverence more highly the great bishop of his city, Milan.

But the departure of Theodosius left the unfortunate young Emperor at the mercy of his own subordinates. Then came a report from France to Milan that Valentinian was dead, found dead—so ran the message—interpreted by enemies as suicide, by friends as murder.

Ambrose's grief was profound, enhanced by the fact that

Valentinian died unbaptized. The body was brought to Milan, laid in a porphyry sarcophagus, and Ambrose had to pronounce in the presence of Theodosius and of the sisters of Valentinian the funeral oration over another crowned head.

The archbishop highly praised the late Emperor's frugality, simplicity of life, self-control. With the luxuries of an empire at his disposal, he had observed the fasts of the Church, and while others feasted he would abstain. He was exemplary in his married life, and rose superior to the selfish laxity by which too many holders of supreme power have been disgraced. While lamenting deeply that Valentinian died unbaptized, Ambrose urged, "Tell me, what else is ours in such matters except the will and the demand for it?" This he had had some time. Ambrose earnestly prayed for the departed, that the Almighty Father would accept Valentinian's desire, although that desire was not carried into effect.

Ambrose would not acknowledge the authority of the two usurpers to whom Valentinian owed his death. They advanced towards Milan, but Ambrose left the city, and took refuge in Florence. This deeply enraged them, and they vowed that if they returned victorious they would take vengeance on the clergy of that place, and stable their horses in the cathedral of that bishop who refused to accept their offerings.

Meanwhile the archbishop found safe shelter in Florence. There he was credited with miraculous power. He prayed for the restoration of a little child to life, and the prayer was granted him. It is touchingly told that Ambrose wrote to this infant child a letter which was to be kept

for him until he grew able to understand what the prayer of the bishop had wrought for him.

And now Theodosius was again called to the defence of the West. It was no mere political dispute; for the triumph of the two usurpers would have meant the triumph of paganism and the persecution of the Church. Theodosius, deeply religious as he was, made all preparations for his successor on the throne, and once more advanced and conquered. The victory of Theodosius was complete. He wrote back to the archbishop, requesting him to return thanksgiving publicly to God for their deliverance, and Ambrose laid the letter on the altar at Milan while he offered the Sacrifice. For Ambrose, it was indeed an hour of gladness. The entire Empire was now under the rule of a Catholic monarch, and East and West were for the moment one. But whatever hopes for the future that victory implied, in an hour they were shattered. Theodosius returned to Constantinople, fell ill from the exertions and exhaustions of the recent campaign, and expired.

Again Ambrose was summoned to lament the death of an emperor; and as the body of Theodosius lay before the altar of Milan the good archbishop delivered his last words over departed greatness.

Ambrose himself had two more years to live. At last he who had pronounced panegyrics upon so many crowned heads was himself departing. It was the year 397. Great weakness came over the archbishop, and he lay upon his bed without power. When the news was heard that Ambrose was dying, Count Stilicho is reported to have said that the death of that great man would be the ruin

of Italy. To some of his clergy who came to take their sorrowful leave of him Ambrose said, "I have not so lived among you as to be ashamed to live; nor do I fear to die, for our Lord is merciful."

Ambrose lay at one extreme end of the long corridor of the house at Milan, evidently dying. At the opposite end, as far distant from the dying bishop as might be, was a group of four deacons discussing in subdued whispers the critical problem of the successor to an office which was not yet vacant. Among other suitable candidates they mentioned the name of Simplician. From the opposite extreme of the corridor came a faint voice murmuring, "He is old, but he is a good man." The dying archbishop had overheard Simplician's name. The four deacons fled in consternation, but Simplician became successor to S. Ambrose.[1]

And while Ambrose still lay waiting in the same corridor for the coming of the end, he saw Jesus Christ draw near beside his couch and smile upon him; and in a few days the call came for him.

From the eleventh hour to the third of the following day he was absorbed in prayer, his hands extended in the form of a cross. The priest Honoratus, who slept in the upper part of the house, was suddenly summoned to the bishop's side, and gave him the Viaticum, the Holy Eucharist, and he in the strength of that Food went forth upon his journey, and was gone.

And straight that early morning on which he died they bore the body to the Greater Church. It was the dawn of the day before the Easter Festival; and many children

[1] Paulinus.

were brought to the font that day to be baptized. And when they returned from the font they said they saw him seated on his episcopal throne, or walking as of old beside their parents, and pointed him out to their elders, who, however, could not see him, for that other world is not always open to our dulled vision, near though it be.

Then Easter Day broke on the Church, and the body was carried to the Ambrosian Basilica, where the Holy Eucharist had been celebrated.[1] And all sorts and conditions of men crowded into the church out of reverence to the great bishop when they knew that he lay there dead. And so profound was the love men bore him that not only the faithful, but Jews and pagans alike, flocked together to attend his funeral.[2]

And when the news of his death reached Africa there came a letter back from S. Augustine to Paulinus, Ambrose's secretary at Milan, urgently requesting him to write the bishop's life. Paulinus did so, for he could scarcely refuse, although he confessed his inability to do justice to so great and saintly a man. Accordingly, while all was vividly present before his mind, he wrote his brief memoirs—very different from the laborious and exhaustive modern biographies, but the work of a witness and a friend, who tells you what he saw, and writes of the man he loved. It is this short account which is to this day the principal source from which S. Ambrose's life is drawn.

[1] Paulinus. [2] Ibid.

April 19

S. Alphege

S. ALPHEGE was born in Gloucestershire in the year 954. He entered the monastery of Deerhurst, near Tewkesbury, in early youth, and afterwards presided over a large community at Bath, where his earnest mind was sorely troubled by the laxity of the majority. He rebuked in forcible terms the brothers, who abandoned the secular dress but retained the secular life. To proclaim one ideal by the outward monastic robe while cherishing another ideal in the heart was no better than an acted lie. It is better not to assume the religious garb rather than while assuming it to neglect the inner life. The sudden death of a monk enabled Alphege to preach to good effect his higher ideal before the startled and sobered community.[1]

When Alphege was thirty years old the Bishop of Winchester died, A.D. 984. These were the days when S. Dunstan ruled at Canterbury.[2] Among the good deeds of Dunstan was the selection of Alphege to the charge of the diocese of Winchester. It was said that the choice was suggested to Dunstan in a dream by S. Andrew.

[1] See Freeman, "Norman Conquest," i. 351, n.

[2] See May 19.

It is certain that he could not have been better advised. Out from the lax and listless community of Bath came the austere and spiritual Alphege to exercise his gifts in a larger field. And the fame of Alphege daily increased. King Ethelred was his constant friend. Severe towards himself, yet gentle towards others, Alphege won the hearts of all men. In the midst of the wintry cold, while the ground was strewn with snow, he would rise from his bed and go forth poorly clad, and with bare feet stand and pray until the returning sun put the stars to flight, and nature spoke to him of the presence of the True Light of the world. It was a marvel to men how Alphege lived, so scantily did he partake of food. His thin, emaciated features betrayed to all the severity of his self-denial, and his hands were so frail and slender that when he held them up the light shone through. But this cruelty towards self was combined with utmost sympathy and kindness towards others. Men often wondered how Alphege knew the right thing to say, and how to deal with widely different types of men. His rule of charity was based on the Apostolic maxim, "If one member suffer, all the members suffer with it." "Then," said Alphege, "he is no part of the body who, when one member suffers, does not suffer with it." Acting on this, he permitted none to depart unaided.

For two and twenty years Alphege laboured among the people of Winchester, increasingly valued and beloved. But these years of comparative calm were followed by arduous and stormy days in a position of still more responsibility and more danger. He was removed from Winchester to Canterbury.[1] There was but one voice in the

[1] A.D. 1006.

nation when Alphege was translated, and that the voice of strong and warm approval. No man was ever more certainly called to high office simply for his spiritual worth than Alphege to Canterbury. Alphege began his work as archbishop with a pilgrimage to Rome, and then settled down in the duties of his office. He held frequent Councils, constantly insisting on the Faith, lest they whose duty it was to protect other men from error should themselves be found wandering out of the way. The graces of his character shone out with still more beauty in the closing years of his career. He was more than ever full of kindliness, shedding tears of sympathy, ready to give, reluctant to receive. Alphege only sat at Canterbury four years, and then his life was closed by martyrdom.

The formidable ravaging Danes were gathering nearer and nearer during the years of Alphege's primacy. They spoiled and burned and slew in place after place, and were victorious everywhere. Sometimes bought off for enormous ransoms, they retreated with their plunder, only to return again for further exactions. Swegen, King of the Danes, himself led the invasion in 1003. He was succeeded by Thurkill, a no less fierce invader. The English king was no match for them. Ethelred the Unready is named by the saint's biographer with contempt. The king was *imbellis quia imbecillis*—more of a monk than of a soldier.

But in the year 1011 the Danes advanced to Canterbury. It was impossible to obtain the necessary stores of provisions to brave a siege. The nobler citizens advised the archbishop to depart while escape was possible. But Alphege refused to leave his cathedral and his city, and strengthened the hearts of all men by his fortitude.

Morning saw the entire city encircled with besieging hosts. Whether Canterbury would have resisted the Danes, it is impossible to say, but it fell through treachery among the defenders, not through the weakness of its fortifications. Then followed horrible barbarities. The archbishop, attempting to plead for humanity, was seized and made to witness the burning of his own cathedral. Then he was imprisoned for seven months in their ships in the hope of extorting a ransom.

It was Easter of the year 1012. The Danish ships were in the Thames near Greenwich. The Danes were holding some pagan festival, and were furiously drunken. In the madness of that unhappy hour they fiercely demanded the archbishop's ransom. They dragged him into the midst of their drunken revelries. "Give us gold," they demanded. Alphege refused. He would give nothing, promise nothing. They pelted him with stones, with logs of wood. At length he fell wounded and in agony. Then one of the Danes, moved with pity, raised his battle-axe, and simply to spare the archbishop further sufferings, clave his head in twain.

When the state of drunken madness was spent the Danes were prevailed on to allow the saint's body to be taken away from them and buried with all reverence in the Cathedral Church of S. Paul in London. After many years it was removed to his own cathedral in Canterbury.

April 23

S. George

THE history of S. George has suffered from two distinct causes of corruption. Not only have the original facts of his life and passion been so overlaid by a distressing accumulation of late mediæval, childish legend that it is exceedingly difficult to disentangle the true from the false, but a further cause of corruption is that he was wilfully identified by heretics with an Arian bishop of Alexandria, intruded into the see of S. Athanasius.

The acts of his martyrdom were condemned by Pope Gelasius in the fifth century as already corrupted by heretics.[1]

The facts about S. George are apparently these: He was born in Cappadocia about 280 A.D., the son of wealthy Christian parents, and was brought up from his childhood in the Christian Faith. Upon his father's death, which occurred while S. George was but a lad, his mother removed from Cappadocia to Palestine, where the family were owners of large estates.

George was known to the Emperor Diocletian, who, ignorant of his Christian convictions, appointed him to the

[1] A.D. 496.

rank of Military Tribune. After his mother's death, which occurred when he was twenty-one, S. George went to join the Emperor at Nicomedia. Diocletian was engaged in furious persecution against the Church, and the young tribune protested before the assembled Senate. He was seized, imprisoned, bound, and scourged, and, after suffering cruel torments, finally put to death.[1]

From the fourth century onwards S. George was singled out among the martyrs for immense popularity. Churches sprang up in his memory through the East and through the West. Saints of whom far more is known have been less noticed than S. George. It is not easy to distinguish the reason. Gregory the Great is said to have rebuilt a church dedicated to S. George in Rome, which had become ancient in his day.[2] Justinian the Emperor built a magnificent church to him in Constantinople.[3] S. Theodore, an ascetic of the time of the Emperor Maurice, built an oratory to him, and regarded him with peculiar veneration. Sidonius the bishop built another at Maintz. There was an altar of S. George at Glastonbury in the time of S. Dunstan.[4] His popularity may be measured again in the glowing panegyric of S. Peter Damian.

In the time of the Crusades victory over the infidel was not infrequently ascribed to S. George. Through the Crusades his popularity was extended in England until he eclipsed Edward the Confessor, and became regarded as the patron of England. Whether the substitution of S. George for S. Edward the Confessor as patron of England implied any change in national ideals, it was,

[1] A.D. 300. [2] Baronius, "Martyrol. Rom." [3] Fleury.
[4] Wm. Malmesbury, "Life of Dunstan."

at any rate, a substitution of the almost unknown for the well known, and of the legendary for the historic. S. Edward stands out clear, definite, historic, certain in his actions and character and even personal appearance, while beyond the fact of martyrdom, almost everything about S. George is uncertain.

The Dragon, with which S. George is popularly associated, is not mentioned in the Acts of the Saint; and is nothing more than a symbolical representation of conquest over evil and unbelief.

May 3

Invention of the Cross

THE wood of the cross on which the Redeemer died is said to have been discovered at Jerusalem in A.D. 326 by the Empress Helena, mother of Constantine the Great.[1]

She sought carefully for the sepulchre of Christ, which was buried deep beneath a mound of earth raised over the spot by the hatred of unbelievers, in order to prevent Christian devotion at the grave where the Lord had lain. Over the mound pagan contempt had erected a Temple of Venus, with an image; and so the goddess of earthly passion dominated the Garden where Magdalene wept, and Peter wondered, and John believed.

Helena, Christian and most devout, gazed on the work of her pagan predecessors, who failed to see the moral glory of Christ, and substituted for His adoration the worship of earthly passion.

She ordered the statue of Venus to be thrown to the ground, the temple destroyed, the mound of earth removed, and search to be made for the sepulchre of the Crucified. Beneath the earth, far down, the searchers found three

[1] Socrates, "H. E.," I. xvii

crosses beyond question those whereon the two malefactors and the Son of Man had died; for under them lay the tablet inscribed with the title, "King of the Jews." One of these three was the blessed cross on which the world was redeemed, but it was not evident which. Helena contemplated these silent witnesses of her Redeemer's anguish, but it was beyond her power to distinguish the false from the true. There was the wood stained with His Sacred Blood: but which of the three was the blood of a malefactor and which the Blood of Christ? She seemed baffled by a vain discovery. Macarius, Bishop of Jerusalem, determined to test the matter by appeal to miracle. Christ had not permitted the discovery only to withhold from them the essential information. There lay a woman in the city long afflicted with disease, and now on the verge of death. Macarius proposed that the wood of each cross should be applied to her, to see whether it would bring miraculous cure. The first touched her, and she continued as before. The second also touched her, and there was no change. But when the third had touched her she revived, and was entirely recovered. Thus Helena knew which was the wood of the cross of Christ; and over the place where the cross had lain she built a magnificent church, and there she left a portion of the cross enshrined in silver. The remainder she sent to the Emperor at Constantinople.

Such is the story of the Invention of the Cross, as told in the fourth and fifth centuries, and widely believed through Christendom. Not that they permitted the mind to dwell on the material instrument of the Passion to the exclusion of its spiritual significance. Let the following passage

from the Sermons of S. Peter Chrysologus testify that this was so :—

"Great indeed is the sign of Christ, the cross of Christ, but it is worthless as a mere outward sign without corresponding inward reality. What profits it to make the sign of the cross upon your brow, if within you harbour evil thoughts? To think evil, speak evil, act evil, refuse to do good, while yet clinging to the sign of the cross, is worse than worthless.

"A man goes to steal, and, stumbling on the way, makes the sign of the cross, yet goes on to do the evil—of what use is that?

"The Kingdom of God is not in word, but in power."[1]

[1] S. Peter Chrysologus, Sermon 265.

May 6

S. John before the Latin Gate

THE incident in the life of S. John here commemorated is one recorded in the second century by Tertullian in Africa. Speaking of Rome, Tertullian says, "How happy is its Church, on which Apostles poured forth all their doctrine along with their blood; where Peter endures a passion like his Lord's; where Paul wins his crown in a death like John's [the Baptist]; where the Apostle John was first plunged, unhurt, into boiling oil, and thence remitted to his island exile!"[1]

This is said to have occurred at the Latin Gate of Rome, and on the ground of it S. John is called a martyr in will.

The character of S. John is best realized by contrast with S. Peter and S. Paul.[2] With S. Peter the dominant feature is action. On all occasions, whether he strikes in his Lord's defence, or enters his Master's grave, or pulls the net to land, the prevailing thought is, What am I to do? With S. John it is not What shall I do? but What will Christ do? Observant, passive, contemplative, his all-absorbing interest is in hearing the words, watching the actions, of the Son of Man. With S. Paul the dominant

[1] Tertullian, "De Præscript.," chap. xxxvi. [2] Herzog, "Encyclop."

feature is neither action nor contemplation, but argument, dialectic, the activities of the reason. Thus S. Paul teaches by rigorous, inevitable conclusions from first principles; S. John does not reason; he witnesses, asserts.

Quite in keeping with the essential difference of type is their relative position in the Acts of the Apostles. S. Peter is first in action; S. Paul in argument; S. John is the least observed of the three. His influence is less easily traced. When S. Paul visits Jerusalem he sees Peter and James, but nothing is said of S. John.[1] Fourteen years later S. Paul visits Jerusalem again, and sees "James, Cephas, and John, who seemed to be pillars."[2]

S. John probably remained in his house in Jerusalem for many years after the Ascension, discharging the duty, divinely imposed, of being a son to the Virgin Mother. The tradition is that he continued there until after the Virgin died, although the length of the period remains uncertain.

The later life of S. John was unquestionably spent in Asia, and chiefly at Ephesus. At what date S. John removed to Asia cannot be determined, but it would seem hardly probable that it happened while S. Paul was there. The absence of all reference to S. John in the letter of S. Paul to the Ephesians, or in taking farewell of the elders at Miletus, seems to show that S. John had not yet come. And it is improbable that S. John should take charge of the Church of Asia until after S. Paul was finally withdrawn from thence. But if, as from internal evidence is often inferred, the Revelation was written before Jerusalem fell, S. John must have come to Asia

[1] Gal. i. 18, 19. [2] Gal. ii. 9.

not later than A.D. 68, since his Epistles to the Seven Churches show a familiarity with the inward condition of each Church such as would seem to involve some lengthy residence in each city. Even this date would allow the scantiest time if S. John was arrested and sent to Rome, and there became a martyr in will, before being exiled to the island of Patmos. The difficulty is that one early tradition places the banishment to Patmos in the reign of Domitian, A.D. 95. This would bring the writing of the Revelation within ten years of that of the Gospel; but the character of the two seems imperatively to demand a far longer interval. The Revelation speaks more of the Son of Thunder; the Gospel more of the Apostle of Love. The former has more of the impetuous intenseness of youth; the latter of calm, deliberate reflectiveness of age. The point of view is much the same. The contrast of light and darkness, the conflict of the world against good, is the same in both, only the one is painted in energetic vision, the other recorded in the soberness of fact. The former is full of Hebrew imagery and Oriental boldness of conception; the latter is in contact with Greek thought, and shows the influence of a different world. The one has for its antecedent Jerusalem, the other Asia. But this involves time. The development becomes perfectly intelligible if the two are not placed in too immediate proximity. If the exile to Patmos occurred in A.D. 69 twenty-five or nearly thirty years may have elapsed before the Gospel was written. Modern writers on the whole incline to the early date of the Revelation, which certainly removes many difficulties.

If, then, this conclusion be historical, S. John saw the

great visions while Jerusalem was still untouched, still the pride of the Jewish heart, the city of the great King, the joy of the whole earth, the very emblem of the permanence of their religious institutions and privileges. Hence, quite naturally, he still employs the phraseology of his Hebrew training. But after the Book of the Revelation was completed, possibly after S. John was released from exile, came that event which must have been to the Jewish mind astounding, overwhelming, the fall of the Holy City, the destruction of Jerusalem. By the fall of Jerusalem the conflict had been changed. The great Temple, with its daily sacrifice, was the concrete embodiment of a Divine revelation, and while it lasted could easily be turned by Jewish dexterity into a powerful witness against S. Paul. But now that all this had perished, the strength of the Jewish opposition was hopelessly broken. That overthrow was the sharply dividing crisis between the Hebrew and the Christian Faith. Thenceforward S. John lives amid new surroundings, in a new world, in the great cities, amid the Churches created and moulded by the mind of S. Paul, confronted with totally different work, requiring weapons of a different kind. It became the mission of S. John to take the supervision of the Churches of S. Paul. He "governed the Churches in Asia." [1] From Ephesus as his central city he issued forth "when called, to the neighbouring regions of the Gentiles; in some to appoint bishops, in some to institute entire new Churches." [2]

1. To this period belongs the beautiful story of S. John and the Robber Chief.

[1] Euseb., III. xxiii.

[2] S. Clemens Alex.

In a city not far from Ephesus there dwelt a young man of powerful frame, graceful countenance, and ardent character, for whom the aged Apostle, searching but silent observer of men, anticipated great things. S. John commended the young man to the pastoral care of the bishop upon whom he had just laid hands in consecration. The bishop received the charge, and the Apostle departed. For a time all went well. The young man was taken into the bishop's home, educated, and at length baptized. Then the bishop, unhappily, relaxed his care, and the young man, left to his own devices, sank into idle and dissolute ways, took to himself companions of the baser sort, and aspired, in virtue of his evident abilities, to be pre-eminent in wrong. At last he openly disowned the Faith, and formed his dissolute associates into a robber gang, over whom he was chief, among the mountains outside the city.

One day S. John reappeared in the city.

"Come, bishop," said the Apostle, "restore to me the deposit which I and Christ committed to thee, in the presence of the Church over which thou dost preside."

The bishop was at first perplexed. He knew that he had borrowed no money of S. John, and could not think what the Apostle meant.

"I demand the young man, the soul of a brother," said S. John.

The bishop wept, and replied, "He is dead."

"Dead!" echoed S. John; "and by what death did he die?"

"He is dead to God," came the sad reluctant answer. "He has turned out hopeless and dissolute, a robber among the mountains."

When S. John heard that, he rent his clothes and uttered many lamentations. "A fine keeper of a brother's soul!" said the Apostle, as he turned away and asked to be conducted to the mountains where the robber dwelt.

So S. John rode away into the country, was arrested by the robbers, and brought into the presence of their chief. But when the young man saw the Apostle of Love he turned and fled. And the aged Apostle, forgetful of his age, pursued him with faltering steps and with piteous entreaties. "Why dost thou fly, my son, from me, thy father—thy defenceless, aged father? Have compassion on me, my son! Fear not. Thou still hast hope of life. I will intercede with Christ for thee."

And, by the Grace of God, those fatherly pleadings prevailed. The young man paused with downcast looks, threw away his weapons, wept, returned, and stood penitent, submissive, lamenting, unable to resist that love and those entreaties, yet ashamed to look the Apostle in the face. And S. John spake words of comfort and forgiveness, and led him back again, a returning prodigal, to the Church which he had forsaken.

2. It was during his residence in Ephesus that the well-known incident of S. John and the heretic Cerinthus occurred. The Apostle was on his way to the baths when he perceived that Cerinthus had entered before him. Instantly the Apostle leaped out and departed, exclaiming, "Let us fly, lest the very bath fall on us, where Cerinthus the enemy of the truth is."[1]

This incident has excited much adverse comment.

[1] S. Irenæus, III. iv.

That it actually occurred there is no historical ground for doubt. It is difficult to see what there is unchristian or unapostolic in declining to meet an opponent whose sincerity you doubt, or whose frame of mind you regard as proof against conviction. In the reaction from the unchristian intolerance of past ages it is easy to recoil to the extreme of an indifference no less unchristian. Indignation against error is the correlative of love of truth. Doubtless in our imperfect human nature such indignation is liable to exceed in the direction of violence, so is also our love of truth liable to fade away into moral apathy. But this only shows that anything good can be corrupted. To the mind of one overwhelmingly convinced that to know God and Jesus Christ is life eternal, the efforts of Christ's opponents to undermine or prevent men's faith in Him could only appear as ruinous to the true interests of mankind, and opposed to the purposes and the love of Almighty God. And Christianity, regarding faith as partly depending on the will, necessarily regards rejection as a moral act. It was Christ Himself Who said that the Holy Ghost would condemn the world "of sin, because they believe not on Me." The impartial dissemination of truth and falsehood may be popular, but it cannot shield itself under the epithet "Christian." A true believer cannot regard denial of Christianity merely as an interesting phenomenon; it must pain him beyond expression, both for the sake of Christ, Who is thereby deprived of the adoration due from His creatures, and for the sake of men whose thoughts are thereby clouded and perverted.

3. And so S. John lived on in Ephesus—the man who saw

and heard and knew—while the Divine events receded ever more and more into the past, and he himself became the sole survivor of the generation which touched the Son of Man. Link after link was broken now. It was now half a century since the great walls of the vast amphitheatre had resounded with the threatening cries against S. Paul. All the Twelve were dead long since save the one aged disciple who lingered, still living on, parted from the Presence more, as it might seem, for others' sake than for his own. Those eyes have gazed on Christ. Those hands have touched Him. Certainly this thought could not be absent from the minds of S. John's disciples that when he was gone

> "... there would be left on earth
> No one alive who knew ...
> Saw with his eyes, and handled with his hands,
> That which was from the first the Word of Life.
> How will it be when none more saith, 'I saw'?"

The tradition preserved by S. Jerome is most natural, that S. John's disciples, the Bishops of Asia, and believers from many Churches gathered round, entreating him, now that old age had come upon him, while yet the strength and clearness of all his powers remained, before the shadows deepened and the powers grew faint, or the life should be removed, and the man disappear from sight who alone could say, I saw, I heard, I knew,—to place on record in abiding form for all the generations yet unborn his witness to the words and ways of the Incarnate Lord.

To that entreaty the aged Apostle gave consent, provided they would fast and pray. And then he, his whole soul and mind and heart bathed in the illuminating glory of the Truth, spoke forth the words like one who brought them

down from heaven, "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. . . . And we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth." [1]

The Gospel was the matured result of more than half a century of thought and meditation on the Incarnate Life of which he had been the privileged, the intimate companion. Across the distance he measured the proportion of the truth more rightly than close at hand.

> "Since much that at the first, in deed and word,
> Lay simply and sufficiently exposed,
> Had grown . . .
> Of new significance and fresh result,
> What first were guessed as points he now knew stars."

The Apostle's greatest work was done: that Gospel of the Divine condescension, the Divine Person invested with the attributes of humanity, was completed. But yet the aged one still lingered. He did not die. The impression grew, and had to be corrected, that he would not die. But though he did not die, "the veil of youth and strength about the spirit" grew thinner and yet more frail, and the bodily powers grew weaker and more weak, as he lingered at Ephesus in extreme old age, waiting for the moment when the Light should altogether flash through. Borne gently to the Church on the loving support of his disciples, he could no longer speak to them in many words, but few and faint and gentle, as of one altogether absorbed in the other world and its companionship. "Little children," he said, "love one another. Little children, love one another." [2] And he would say this every day,

[1] S. Jerome, "Revelatione saturatus." [2] S. Jerome.

until at last his children, his disciples, growing weary at the monotonous reiteration, ventured to ask him, "Master, why always this one saying?" "Because," he answered, "it is the Lord's command; and if this alone be done it is enough."

Of his death nothing is certainly known.

May 19

S. Dunstan

DUNSTAN, the strong personality, "the resolute Dunstan," the most conspicuous English figure of his time, was born near Glastonbury in the year of grace 925.[1] His life has suffered grievous misrepresentation through the persistent efforts of later biographers to invest the object of their admiration with the characteristics of a later age. He is with difficulty disentangled from the legendary growth with which imagination has partially concealed him. Few, perhaps, of the saints have suffered more from unreasoning invective and indiscriminating praise. His career extended across the lives of seven kings. Born in Athelstan's first year, Dunstan lived through the brief reigns of Edmund, Edred, Edwy, Edgar, S. Edward, and on into that of Ethelred.

Dunstan received his early teaching in the school of Glastonbury, distinguished in those days alike by the ability of its Irish teachers and the independence of its temper. Glastonbury was under no organized monastic rule. The acceptance of a common authority, conspicuous in the order of S. Benedict, was almost unknown in England

[1] Florence of Worcester, "Chronicle."

at the time.[1] According to the biographers, Englishmen of that age had most inadequate regard for the principle of authority. Even the religious lived each pretty much as he pleased.

But Glastonbury was famed for education. The reputed burial-place of S. Patrick naturally drew to itself Irish devotion, while the excellence of its teaching and its seclusion from the world offered less disputable advantages. Here, then, like many noble Irish youths, came Dunstan to be taught. His unusual capacity, his insatiable thirst for knowledge led his teachers into the serious mistake of urging him into study when it had been wise to restrain; and this excessive application to work far beyond his strength led to its natural result, and nearly cost his life. Dunstan lay long with fevered brain, unconscious and despaired of, to the grief of all who knew him, for the lad had endeared himself to scholars and masters alike. One night in the height of his fever he was seen to rise from his bed, and to walk in his sleep. He went out to the doors of the church, but found them fastened. Then he turned to a ladder left against the wall, climbed up, and wandered upon the roof of the building. In the morning he was found in peaceful sleep beside the altar within the church. He woke, the fever was gone, but Dunstan could not tell by what means he reached the place of safety.

On recovering strength, Dunstan threw himself with redoubled energy into study. And while he devoted himself chiefly to Holy Scripture, he by no means excluded secular literature. He read poetry, he studied

[1] Osberne. See the Lives edited by Bishop Stubbs in the Rolls Series.

mathematics, he delighted in music, in which last his Irish teachers displayed more genius than in their Latin. Dunstan showed great versatility; he played on the harp, he made designs for embroidered stoles.

Dunstan is next found in the Court of King Athelstan, where his versatility at first secured him warm admirers, and afterwards bitter enmity. He was accused of being too clever by half, and in league with the powers of darkness. His harp, suspended on the wall, was said to have played a hymn untouched by human hand. Whether this story was an invention of opponents or an expression of their mistrust, Dunstan was viewed with deep suspicion and dislike, and continued residence at the Court became impossible. He fled, but was pursued by his enemies, seized, struck, half drowned, thrown into the mire, and left to escape with difficulty, disfigured, almost unrecognizable. The very dogs did not know him until reassured by his voice, upon which Dunstan observed that dogs and men had changed their natures, the dogs were human, and men were brutal.

From Glastonbury Dunstan made his way to Winchester, where the bishop impressed strongly upon him the superiority of the monastic life. But Dunstan's heart was captivated by other ideals. He had set his affections on a lady at the Court, and he argued repeatedly against the bishop's suggestion. Evidently he had reached the crisis in which the question of vocation had to be faced and determined. And it is significant that the decision was made at last for that calling which the young man was reluctant to accept. It has been sometimes said that Dunstan was sickened of the world by his experience

at the Court, and so threw himself into the opposite form of life. But God sometimes diverts men by bitter experience from that which they naturally prefer to that which they afterwards by grace learn to approve. And Dunstan may have the credit of accepting his true vocation in the life on which he entered just as much as for the time in the life which he left. Our own strong preference for one ideal of life may hinder us from doing justice to any other.

Dunstan then resolved that the monastic life was his vocation, and the Bishop of Winchester ordained him priest. Freed from the weakness inseparable from indecision, Dunstan was able to concentrate his undivided energies upon the life which he now regarded as his calling. Not far from the Church of Glastonbury he built himself a cell, dividing his time between devotion, study, and manual labour. There he painted and wrought in metal as a smith, wrote manuscripts, prayed.

To a temperament such as his solitude brought encounter with the Evil One; and, as Luther threw his inkstand at his spiritual foe, so did Dunstan, to drive away the coarse suggestions of his tempter, heat the tongs in the fire, and endeavour to seize the Evil One by the nose.

The assaults of the Evil One were often put to flight by the repetition of the Psalms. In severe trial Dunstan would pray—

> "Let God arise, and let His enemies be scattered:
> Let them also that hate Him flee before Him." [1]

And at that hymn Satan fled.[2]

The discipline of lonely work and prayer formed only a

[1] Ps. lxviii.

[2] Wm. Malmesbury, in Stubbs, p. 274.

brief episode in Dunstan's life. He was called to wider labours when Athelstan died.[1] The accession of Edmund brought him back to Court as counsellor. Here he exhibited at once administrative powers which drew upon him, not unnaturally, the jealousy of the nobles. Edmund's confidence in Dunstan was complete, and the counsellor's influence correspondingly extensive. But the royal authority was larger in theory than in fact, and Edmund, reluctantly compelled to yield to the adverse criticism of his nobles, consented to Dunstan's dismissal. For a second time he departed from Court. But Edmund, one day hunting in the woods at Cheddar, saw the stag and the hounds go headlong over a precipice, while himself, in full pursuit, with a passionate prayer to Dunstan's God, barely reined his horse in one foot-pace from destruction. As the king looked shuddering down where stag and hounds lay dashed to pieces, he vowed to make amends for Dunstan's wrong. So Dunstan was made Abbot of Glastonbury.

Edmund's reign was brief. After six years Edred succeeded him. Under Edred, Dunstan was still more powerful. Without him no man moved hand or foot in the whole kingdom. Edred offered him the see of Winchester, but the Abbot of Glastonbury declined. Modern writers have ascribed this refusal to ambition, since he afterwards accepted the see of Canterbury. But it is not difficult to recognize that circumstances may so change as to justify both the acceptance and the refusal without implying the motive of ambition.[2] Edred was weak and sickly, he rather dragged out his life than lived, his whole reign was a constant succession of illnesses, rendering him physically

[1] A.D. 940. [2] Stubbs, "Memorials," p. 277.

incapable of the soldier's life; and Dunstan, upon whom the burden and responsibility of the kingdom really rested, refused to accept a further spiritual responsibility which would remove him from Edred's side.[1]

Edred deposited with Dunstan the royal treasury accumulated by his father, thinking that in the unsettled state of the country his wealth would be safer in the monastery and under the abbot's protection. Dunstan, out of regard for Edred, undertook the responsibility. Then justice began to reign throughout the land, and Dunstan's strong decisive action speedily repressed the violent and unprincipled. And the young king thankfully recognized his indebtedness to his minister. Dunstan practically lived in the palace, and Edred did not suffer his absence long.

Edred's sickly constitution did not long endure, even with Dunstan's help, the troubles of a kingdom. Dunstan was away when Edred died, and returned to find the dead abandoned by his courtiers in their anxiety to win the favour of his successor. To his loyalty to the living Dunstan added his reverence for the dead, and so the abbot buried his king at Winchester.[2]

In 955 Edwy took the throne. He was a foolish, self-indulgent youth, under the influence of two bad women, mother and daughter, who hoped between them to secure the power of the kingdom. On his very coronation day he left the great assembly of nobles and bishops of his nation for the companionship of these women. The officers of the kingdom were indignant. At the archbishop's suggestion, Dunstan went to bring back the young king to a sense of his duty. Edwy returned, but the act cost Dunstan his

[1] Lingard, vol. i. p. 253.

[2] "Memorials," p. 282.

position and nearly his life. The two women, enraged by the abbot's interference, attempted to use the royal power to ruin his monastery and seize his possessions. Men were even sent to capture him and put out his eyes;[1] but he escaped from England, and took refuge in Flanders, where Arnulph, Count of Flanders, received him joyfully.[2]

Dunstan's conduct at Edwy's coronation has in modern times been characterized as an exhibition of arbitrary and tyrannical power, a trampling of the royal authority underfoot. Hallam describes it as "an intolerable outrage of spiritual tyranny."[3] But it is clear that Dunstan's act was approved, if not ordered, by the assembled nobles of the kingdom, and nothing could have been more in the young king's interest than to prevent him from alienating the strength of his realm on his coronation day.[4]

In Dunstan's absence from the country the young king experienced nothing but disaster.[5] Mercia and Northumbria, disgusted with Edwy's incompetence, threw off their allegiance, and accepted Edgar as king.[6] The river Thames formed the boundary-line between two kingdoms, Edwy retaining the south, Edgar the north. Modern writers have ascribed the misfortunes of Edwy to the unscrupulous influence of a tyrannical priest. But, as Lingard truly says, this is to set aside the authority of the original historians, and to supply the place with conjectures.[7] Dunstan was not in England until the rebellion was past and the kingdom divided; and if Edwy lost the

[1] "Memorials," p. 285.
[2] A.D. 956.
[3] "Middle Ages," i. 516.
[4] See Lingard, i. 255.
[5] "Florence of Worcester," p. 101.
[6] A.D. 957.
[7] Lingard, i. 258.

crown of Mercia it was the result of "his own oppression and lawless conduct." [1] He alienated the wise and prudent, and gathered round himself the worthless.[2]

Edgar's accession permitted Dunstan's return. The historian Collier is scandalized with Abbot Dunstan for throwing off allegiance to his lawful sovereign Edwy, and courting the favour of revolters. "Now, S. Cyprian, though Bishop of Carthage, did not think fit to return from banishment without the Emperor's leave. Why, then, did not S. Dunstan stay for King Edwy's order? What made him come back at the invitation of a usurper, reside at his court, receive his favour and caresses, and accept the Bishopric of Worcester at his importunity? In short, King Edwy was living two years after S. Dunstan was recalled, and yet we do not find he made any application or paid the least submission to his lawful sovereign." [3]

Here is a curious attempt to judge S. Dunstan from the standpoint of a Nonjuror. To blame a tenth-century saint on the ground that he was unversed in the doctrine of passive resistance is one of those confusions which ought to demonstrate conclusively the truism that a man must be judged by the standard of the age in which he lives. Judged by that standard, Dunstan's conduct would not have been reproved.

Within two years Edwy died, and the kingdom was again united under Edgar. It was a period prolific in youthful kings. Edgar was only sixteen. The reign of Edgar was the time of Dunstan's greatest ascendency.[4] Edgar appointed him to the bishoprics of Worcester,[5] and then

[1] Lingard, i. 259. [2] Stubbs, "Memorials," p. 35.
[3] Collier, "H. E.," i. 431. [4] Stubbs, p. 91. [5] A.D. 957.

of London,[1] which he held simultaneously. The monkish historian's defence of Dunstan's pluralities is quaint. "John, the beloved disciple, had charge of seven Churches in Asia, and S. Paul had the care of all the Churches."[2]

Still greater responsibilities awaited Dunstan. Odo, Archbishop of Canterbury, died. It would seem probable that Edwy made the next two appointments. First came Elfsin of Winchester, who died of the cold upon the Alps on his way to Rome to obtain the pallium.[3] Next came Byrhthelm, Bishop of Dorset. Then, as it seems, Edwy died, and Edgar sent Byrhthelm back ignominiously to his former diocese, and set Dunstan in his place.[4] With Dunstan as Archbishop of Canterbury begins the attempt to expel the secular priests and replace them by regular monks. Here again Dunstan has been grievously misrepresented. His object was not to attack the married clergy, as such, but to revive monastic life in the monasteries and cathedrals. "The movement, with all its drawbacks, was justifiable, perhaps absolutely necessary. . . . We cannot doubt that a monastic mission system was necessary for the recovery of middle England from the desolation and darkness which had been brought upon it by the Danes, or that the monastic revival was in those regions both successful and necessary."[5]

If the description of the secular clergy given by William of Malmesbury be correct, Dunstan had ample reason to urge reform.[6] The rules of the Church were neglected by them, they were entangled in worldly pursuits, they were conspicuous among the laity for indolence

[1] A.D. 959. [2] Osberne, p. 106. [3] Stubbs, p. 38.
[4] A.D. 959. [5] Stubbs, p. 98. [6] "Memorials," p. 300.

and frivolity, they were self-indulgent and intemperate, their ignorance of learning was so great that they could barely recite the offices which they did not understand. On these grounds Dunstan determined that none should be promoted unless he would conform to the monastic rule.

Edgar died in 975. Dunstan lived through the reign of S. Edward the martyred king,[1] and on into that of Ethelred, whom he consecrated and crowned.[2] But the political influence of Dunstan ends with Ethelred's accession. From that time he retired from the labours of a statesman, and devoted himself exclusively to the direction of the Church.

Dunstan's attempts to introduce the Benedictine Order into the cathedrals and monasteries had raised many opponents. His sentence, "Either let them live canonically or leave their churches," was not rigidly enacted, but it was Dunstan's ideal. When the archbishop was old and enfeebled with many labours, a strong deputation of the opposite party waited on him at Calne in Wiltshire to urge the argument of the secular clergy.[3] But Dunstan was too old for controversy. He complained that they were taking advantage of his age and feebleness, and that he left the matter to the judgment of Christ. The meeting ended in a terrible catastrophe; for the floor of the building fell in, involving many in death, while Dunstan and his party escaped untouched.[4] The occurrence has awakened in several modern writers a suspicion fatal to Dunstan's integrity. The suspicion has not a shadow of proof, and is altogether unjust.[5]

[1] See March 18.
[2] "Florence of Worcester," p. 107.
[3] Collier, i. 467.
[4] Osberne, pp. 114, 306.
[5] Collier, i. 468; Hook, i. 413; Lappenberg, i. 147; Robertson, iv. 71; Fuller, i. 351.

Dunstan's zeal in upholding the sanctity of the marriage tie was a characteristic rendered peculiarly needful by the laxity of his age. He boldly excommunicated a noble for an illegal marriage. The noble appealed to the Pope, and obtained a removal of the excommunication. Dunstan was unmoved by papal mandate; nothing should induce him to depart from the command of Christ.[1]

But Dunstan's influence was very considerable, even in Ethelred's reign. The king laid siege to Rochester, and was wasting the territories of the Church. Dunstan warned him that if the patrimony of S. Andrew was invaded the apostle was able to retaliate on the king. Ethelred was unmoved by reference to an apostle. Dunstan then bribed the king with a hundred pounds of silver. And this proved effectual. The siege of Rochester was at an end. Dunstan waxed contemptuous. "Since you prefer money to God, silver to an apostle, your avarice rather than my bidding, there shall surely come upon you the evils which the Lord hath spoken concerning you."[2]

Dunstan's active, arduous career was permitted to end in an evening calm. He was not old in years, being only sixty-four when he died,[3] but apparently he was worn out before his time. He devoted himself to the quiet duties of a religious—prayer and study and the correcting of the manuscripts of the library where he lived. Dunstan's wise care in this matter should be remembered. The importance of accurate copies in the days before printing is inestimable.

But Dunstan was always accessible to those who sought him, earnestly striving to reconcile the alienated,

[1] "Memorials," p. 67. [2] Ibid., p. 117. [3] Ibid., p. 321.

to keep men true to their marriage vows, to protect the widow and orphan, giving to the poor food and clothing.[1]

"And thus all this English land was filled with his holy doctrine, shining before God and men like sun and moon. When he was minded to pay to Christ the Lord the due hours of service and the celebrations of the Mass, with such entireness of devotion he laboured in singing that he seemed to be speaking face to face with the Lord, even if just before he had been vexed with the quarrels of the people. Like S. Martin, he constantly kept eye and hand intent on heaven, never letting his spirit rest from prayer." [2]

It was the Festival of the Ascension.[3] The Gospel for the day—the same is now in use—spoke of the Lord appearing to His disciples after the Resurrection, and upbraiding them for their unbelief.[4] Dunstan came down from the sacrarium to expound the Gospel to the people.[5] He spoke as he had never spoken before. The purpose of the Incarnation, the Redemption achieved by death, the Resurrection as the victory over him who had the power of death, the angel-circled Ascension into heaven, the preciousness of the Sacred Blood—Dunstan spoke with rapture of all these. He told them that though a man were stained with the sins of all the world, yet need he not despair if he trusted to the Mediator between God and man. Dunstan went back to the altar, and proceeded to the Consecration. Then once more before the Blessing he preached a second time, overflowing with love and fervour of faith, and conscious of his speedy departure from among

[1] "Memorials," p. 314. [2] Ibid., p. 104.
[3] Osberne, p. 121. [4] S. Mark xvi. [5] Osberne, p. 122.

them. He entreated them to fix their minds whither Christ that day was gone. He blessed them, and repeated the Saviour's words, "He shall give you another Comforter, that He may abide with you for ever, even the Spirit of Truth."[1]

So he turned away from them towards the altar again. But the people, instinctively realizing that his end was near, gathered round him, and Dunstan spoke to them once more. He knew that he was no longer for this world, and asked them to remember him when he was gone. "His people sobbed and lamented so bitterly," says an ancient biographer, "that you would have thought the judgment day was come."[2] And their archbishop consoled them as best he could, returned to the altar, and partaking the Gift of eternal life, commended himself and the people to the Eternal Pastor's keeping.

Dunstan left the church and entered the refectory. After dinner he went to an upper chamber, and lay down to rest. To the brethren he spoke words of counsel and of the prospects of England after he was dead. So he lingered on till the Saturday after Ascension, and then died. The words of Dunstan's last prayer are preserved for us:—

"Glory to Thee, Almighty Father, Who givest the Bread of Life from heaven to them that fear Thee, that we may be mindful of the wonders Thou hast wrought upon the earth in sending us Thy Only-begotten Son, true Man, of true Virgin born. To Thee, O Holy Father, we give thanks, Who didst create us when we were not, and when we were sinners didst make us partakers of this Grace, through the same Holy Son our God and our Lord, Who hath made all

[1] S. John xiv. 16. [2] Osberne, p. 123.

things with Thee and the Holy Spirit, Who rules and reigns for ever and ever." [1]

It was the year A.D. 988 when Dunstan died.[2]

Dunstan's character and work was even during his life praised in terms of warmest admiration. It was said that God had raised him up to be for the English people what Daniel was for the Israelites in Babylon.[3]

"He was only sixty-four when he died, but his public life had begun early and lasted long, and his fame lived both at home and abroad, in the praises of the strangers whom he had befriended, the Churches that he had planted, the scholars he had taught, but chiefly in the longing remembrance of the peace and glory which Edgar, under his teaching, had maintained—the peace and glory which were written in the hearts of the English." [4]

His life was described in verse, and commemorated in hymns for S. Dunstan's Day. A lamentable controversy arose between the monks of Canterbury, where he was buried, and of Glastonbury, whither he was said to have been translated, as to which of them were the true possessors of the body of the saint. But the dispute attests the veneration in which his memory was held—a veneration so great that men like Anselm breathed his name in their devotions, and drew fresh strength from the brightness of his example.

[1] Osberne, p. 126. [2] Ibid., p. 120.
[3] "Memorials," p. 372, letters written between A.D. 959 and 988.
[4] Bishop Stubbs in "Memorials," p. 104.

May 26

S. Augustine, Archbishop

IT was in the year of our Lord 596 that Gregory the Great selected Augustine, abbot of the monastery of S. Andrew in Rome, and sent him, together with a group of companions, to preach the Word of God to the Anglo-Saxons.

Augustine and his companions started upon their mission. They arrived, it is thought, at the monastery in the Isle of Lerins off the south of France; and there, relating the purpose of their mission, they were met with such accounts of the barbarous character of our forefathers that their courage failed them. Rather than venture further, and face a wild, brutal, and unbelieving people, whose very language they would not be able to understand, they timidly deputed Augustine as their representative to go back to Gregory in Rome and crave permission to return. They humbly entreated the Pope to relieve them of this dangerous, laborious, and precarious mission. Gregory's answer might have been anticipated, for Augustine and his companions could have little understood the strong, dauntless character of the vigorous, energetic Pope if they supposed him

likely to relent before such weak and feeble pleadings. Gregory sent Augustine back with a brief, emphatic reply. Rather than turn back from such an undertaking it were better not to have begun. Neither the perils of the way nor the words of other men ought to discourage them. Let them go on in the work which God had given them, remembering that severe effort will be crowned with an eternal reward. They are to regard Augustine as their abbot, and to obey him in all humility, knowing that whatever they perform by his injunctions will turn to the good of their souls. And Gregory ended his letter with words expressive of his fervent longing for our conversion. "May the Almighty God of His grace protect you, and grant me to see in the eternal land the fruit of your labours. And if I may not share your labours, may I rejoice in your reward, for my heart's desire is to labour with you."

So Gregory urged them forward to the work. But evidently Augustine's report from Lerins had convinced the Pope that the mission to England was far more difficult and dangerous than he imagined, for he now fortified his missionaries with numerous letters of commendation to the bishops of Gaul, a precaution hitherto neglected. After considerable delay among the French cities, probably waiting until winter was past, Augustine and his monks made their famous entrance into the Isle of Thanet.

The first labours of Gregory's mission were not turned, as might have been anticipated, towards that northern kingdom of Deira whence came the fair-haired Saxon slaves whom Gregory saw in the market-place at Rome, but rather to the southern kingdom of Kent. But the course which

Augustine pursued was geographically natural, and was probably prompted by the fact that the mission was likely to gain in Kent a favourable reception, since the queen, Bertha, was already a Christian. Ethelbert, King of Kent, who had now ruled the kingdom for years, held a kind of overlordship over the kingdoms of the Heptarchy, so that his conversion would be peculiarly important. Ethelbert had married Bertha on the express understanding that she should be unhindered in the practices of her religion. Unhindered indeed she was; but if her conduct favourably impressed the king with the character of her religion, neither her influence nor the teaching of her chaplain, Lieudhard—if, indeed, they attempted it—drew Ethelbert from a conservative adherence to the paganism of his forefathers. The Court chaplain, with all the advantages of the queen's support, did not succeed in advancing the Christian Faith as the obscure Roman monk advanced it, but perhaps in silent and quiet ways he paved the way for its acceptance.

Ethelbert received the mission, a party of some forty men, with royal generosity. He permitted their settlement in the Isle of Thanet, and provided them with all necessaries, until the time of his famous interview. Ethelbert's estimate of Christianity may be partly measured by the fact that, being suspicious lest Augustine should resort to magical incantations, he would not meet him beneath a covered roof, but only under the broad canopy of heaven.

"But they," writes Bede, "inspired of no evil power, but by the strength of God, came forth, bearing as their standard a silver cross and the image of our Lord painted on a

board, singing litanies to God for their own and for the people's salvation in whose behalf and to whom they came."

Then, at the king's request, they explained before all the Court the purpose of their journey.

Ethelbert evidently listened with genuine interest, and when the message was complete he answered, "Beautiful are the words and the promises which you bring me, but since they are new and by no means sure I cannot forsake those things which, with the whole English race, I have so long observed, or give my assent to what you say. But since you come to us from far, and as it seems to me are eager to give us what you believe to be the truest and the best, I would not hinder you; nay, rather I receive you with every welcome, and will provide for your necessities, nor do I forbid you to associate with yourself such persons as your words may win."

King Ethelbert's reply reveals a cautious but open mind, neither hastily relinquishing inherited traditions nor scornfully insensible to the attractiveness of the new.

Ethelbert gave the Roman mission a residence within the walls of Canterbury, the metropolis of his kingdom. So, after their manner, Augustine and his companions advanced towards the capital city, bearing the sacred cross and the figure of the great King, our Lord Jesus Christ, and singing this litany—

"We beseech Thee, Lord, of Thy mercy take away Thy wrath from this city, and from Thy holy House, for we have sinned. Alleluia."[1]

Very significant is the method by which Augustine and

[1] Bede, I. xxv.

his companions sought to make Christianity welcome to the people. It began more by example than by definite teaching. As soon as they had taken up their residence in the city they began to follow the Apostolic life of the primitive Church. They were frequent in prayer, in watchings; they fasted; they delivered the message of eternal life when opportunity allowed. Meanwhile they kept apart from the affairs of the world, as alien to the purpose of their mission; they accepted only such gifts as were essential to the necessities of life; they were manifestly prepared to suffer adversities, even to death, for the Truth's sake which they had come to preach. Consequently, before long they began to see the fruit of their labours: some believed and were baptized.[1]

The little Church of S. Martin at Canterbury was considered ancient in the days when the Roman mission settled in the city. Queen Bertha was accustomed to worship there before Augustine came, and Augustine and his companions sang and prayed and celebrated the Mass, and preached and baptized within these walls. With wonderful rapidity their influence extended. Within a year, that is, at Whitsuntide, A.D. 597, Ethelbert himself abandoned the Gentile rites, and was by Baptism adopted into the unity of Christ's Holy Church.[2]

The conversion of Ethelbert was followed by that of a vast number of his people.[3] But although, naturally, the king rejoiced when his people followed him into the Christian Church, he made no effort to urge conversion upon the unconvinced or the unwilling. Obvious as the duty of this course appears to us, it has not been obvious

[1] Bede, I. xxv. [2] Ibid. [3] Some 11,000.

at many times and in many places of the Christian story. "Ethelbert had learned," says Bede, "from his instructors and guides in salvation that the service of Christ must be voluntary, not enforced."

After this splendid triumph Augustine went to France, and there was consecrated Archbishop by Virgilius, Metropolitan of Arles. So Augustine settled at Canterbury as first archbishop. He next sent messengers to Gregory, announcing the blessing which had attended his labours. The Pope sent Mellitus, Paulinus, and Justus to work under Augustine. The new-comers from Rome brought vestments, altar vessels, relics, and a Metropolitan pall for Augustine, together with congratulations and warnings, and letters of counsel in reply to certain questions upon which the archbishop had consulted him.

Gregory's heart was evidently full of exultation when he wrote to Canterbury. The first utterance which came, the natural expression of his gladness, was the song of the angels at the Nativity, "Glory to God in the Highest, and on earth peace to men of goodwill, because the grain of corn has died and borne much fruit that it might not reign alone in heaven." But he could not avoid, for Augustine's sake, feeling afraid of this success, and earnestly and affectionately warned him of the perils of pride. Let him remember his offences as a remedy to boastfulness.

Of course, as all men know, the entrance of Augustine into England was not the introduction of Christianity into the land. The native Briton had come centuries before under the influence of Roman civilization and of the Christian Faith. London had had its bishop at least as

early as A.D. 314. But the long and dreadful struggle of the Saxon Invasion, extending over a century and a half, had slowly but inevitably driven the Briton back into the extreme south and west of the land, into Cornwall and Wales, while the Saxon pagan conqueror destroyed almost every vestige of the religion of his conquered foes. Thoroughly depressed and enfeebled in the struggle, the Briton may surely be forgiven if he had no heart to turn from the anxiety of self-preservation to the problem of converting his conqueror.

Still, the British Church was there, with its organized communities of monks to the extent of many thousands, its seven bishops at the least, its saints; for S. David of Menevia was probably yet alive, possibly also S. Teilo of Llandaff, when S. Augustine entered the land. Certainly the ancient Church merited the most considerate treatment, both for its past labours and its present calamities.

Through Ethelbert's influence Augustine arranged the famous Conference between himself and the British representatives. Forth came the Celtic bishops to the borderline of the Saxon land, into close proximity for the moment to their feared and hated conquerors. Somewhere beneath an oak on the borders of the Severn the Conference was held. Augustine's purposes were these: (1) to induce the British Church to abandon its practical divergence from Rome; (2) to secure his own recognition as archbishop over the older community; (3) to obtain the aid of the Welsh in the conversion of the Saxon.

The practical divergence was nothing more than a question of the proper date for keeping Easter Day—a matter so insignificant that it is difficult to read the

dispute without utter weariness. The Roman Church had several times over changed its own practice in the matter, while the British Church, owing to its isolation, had not come into conformity with the latest Roman use. Yet to the British mind their practice was now a venerable tradition which they saw no reason, and were extremely reluctant, to change. The two Churches have been compared to two relatives who, meeting after long separation, are disconcerted to find unexpected, if important, changes between them. Doubtless it had been wise in the Welsh to fall into line with Western Christendom in a matter so small. Doubtless it had been wise in Augustine to regard the matter with large-hearted superiority to minor diversities. Unhappily, neither side exhibited the temper essential to unity. A long discussion ensued. Augustine resorted in vain to "entreaties, exhortations, and reproofs."[1] The Welsh held tenaciously to their tradition, impervious to the proposals of the new-comers. And even the restoration of sight to a blind man, which, so ran the report, Augustine achieved, failed to win from the Celtic clergy anything more than an admission that the miracle-worker was preaching the way of righteousness, but as for the dispute in question, they could not yield without the consent and approval of their brethren.

Before entering this larger Conference the British representatives consulted a venerable recluse, Abbot Dinoot, upon the vexed question whether they should or should not for the authority of Augustine abandon the traditions of their fathers. To which Dinoot answered, "If he be a man of God, then follow him." And when the bishops

[1] Bede II. ii.

asked how this could be ascertained, Dinoot replied, "The Lord said, 'Take My yoke upon you, and learn of Me; for I am meek and lowly in heart.' If, then, Augustine be meek and lowly in heart, we may believe that he bears the yoke of Christ, and offers it to you. But if he be harsh or proud, depend upon it that he is not of God, nor are his speeches to be regarded."

Dinoot's questioners still asked how they were to know whether Augustine was meek and lowly.

Dinoot said, "Take good care that he and his party arrive first at the Conference, and if when you approach he rises to meet you, be sure that he is Christ's servant, and listen to what he says; but if he disdains you, and will not rise to meet you, since you are the more numerous, then he himself may be disdained by you."

This putting Augustine's humility to the test shows plainly the impression which his temper had already created. The new Roman usages were made still less congenial by the imperiousness of their advocate.

Accordingly, when the Conference met, the British bishops were the last to come, and Augustine did not rise to meet them. The effect of this unfortunate beginning was not mended by his subsequent remarks. "In many things," he observed, "you are contrary to our custom, and, indeed, to that of the Catholic Church. But if you will make me these three concessions—to keep Easter at its proper time, to observe in Baptism the practices of the Holy Roman and Apostolic Church, to preach the Word of God with us to the English people—I will consent to overlook all other differences, although they are strangely contrary to our customs."

Certainly the tone and the method were not calculated to conciliate, and it is scarcely wonderful that the Conference utterly came to grief. "If he would not rise to greet us now," exclaimed the bishops, "how much less would he regard us if subjected to his authority! Already he considers us beneath contempt."

Accordingly they replied that they could not accept his conditions, nor would they own him as their archbishop, nor join his mission to the Saxons. To which Augustine retorted that if they refused peace with their brethren they would encounter war with their enemies, and if they declined to preach the Way of Life to the English nation they would meet death at their hands. With this prediction he left them.

In later days, Edilfrid, King of the Angles, gathered a host against the city of Chester. The great religious community, the monks of Bangor, pleaded fervently for the city. This vast religious body was so numerous that when divided into seven portions under their respective abbots, no portion contained less than three hundred men. And the fact may give some idea of the extent of the British Church and its monastic institutions. For three days the monks fasted, and were drawn up upon a hill within sight of the field of battle, and there they prayed. King Edilfrid inquired who they were and what they were doing, and being told that they were praying for his defeat, then said he, "If they are calling to their God against us, they are fighting against us; although they are unarmed, they are attacking us with their imprecations."

Accordingly, he ordered his men to fall upon them, and no less than twelve hundred were slain. This terrible

calamity took place some time after Augustine's death, but Bede sees in it the fulfilment of Augustine's menaces and predictions.

The Conference shows neither side at their best. There is much to be said against the British attitude. They were certainly narrow and sensitive, and made too much of minor differences and of petty details in Augustine's behaviour. They were obviously warped by prejudice and personal dislike. But, on the other hand, the conditions which Augustine sought to impose of conformity, submission, and co-operation, were every one of them exceedingly difficult to the Celt in his present frame of mind. It was hard to abolish cherished traditions at the bidding of a new head of a mission in Kent, the youngest of all the bishops. It was not less difficult to accept as their superior a newly consecrated foreigner over the heads of the long succession of the ancient British sees.[1] It was still less congenial to their national temper to strive for the conversion of the men who had robbed them of their homes, and driven them from their land. It required a nobler spirit than they at that time possessed to forgive and to forget, and to acquiesce in apparent servitude, while the hope was not yet faded of driving the Saxon out, and recovering their own again.

Unhappily, the ill-will between the two Churches by no means died away. Augustine's successor, Lawrence, complains that a Scottish bishop, Dagan, would not eat in the same house with bishops of the Saxon Church.[2]

All these considerations remind us that it was a situation of extremest delicacy, that it needed infinite tact

[1] Cf. Haddan, "Remains," p. 315.

[2] Bede, II. iv.

and sympathy and patience to conduct a conference with such material to a profitable issue. And without doing injustice to the man to whom England owes so much, it is difficult not to see that Augustine had his imperfections, and that tact and patience were not among his strongest graces.

Of Augustine's death no details, not even the year, are positively certain. It was probably in 604. He was buried outside, not within the Church of the Apostles Peter and Paul, for the building was not yet completed. But after the consecration the body was buried within the north aisle, which became the burial-place of a long succession of archbishops.

Unhappy divisions between England and Rome have sometimes hindered men from the whole-hearted recognition of Augustine's labours and their own indebtedness. But in earlier ages the names of Gregory and Augustine were held in deepest gratitude and veneration. The Council of Cloveshoe in 747 enacted that the festivals of S. Gregory and S. Augustine should be of universal obligation.[1] They praised and honoured the monk Augustine, Archbishop and Confessor, who "first brought to the English nation the understanding of the Faith, the Sacrament of Baptism, and the knowledge of the heavenly land."

[1] Haddan and Stubbs, iii. 368.

May 27

Venerable Bede

WE can picture Bede left at the Monastery of Wearmouth at the age of seven in Abbot Benedict's charge;[1] and then, two years later, as one of the twenty-two companions of Ceolfrid, sent by Benedict to take possession of his new monastery of S. Paul at Jarrow.[2] Bede entered that house at the age of nine, and practically never left it. Of Ceolfrid's companions ten were professed, and twelve were being trained. Ceolfrid, a man of learning and piety and deep humility, high-born, but willing to take the humblest offices, set an example of earnestness and fidelity to rule and devotion which was not lost upon his contemporaries, and could not have been thrown away upon Bede. Ceolfrid's continual presence in church, and care in teaching the music to novices are specially recorded.[3]

During Bede's boyhood came a terrible visitation of the plague, which carried away nearly the whole brotherhood at Jarrow—all, at least, who could read or preach, or sing the antiphons and responses in the church. From this

[1] A.D. 680.

[2] See "Hist. Abb. Gyrvondium," Anon. in Stephenson, Appendix, p. 323.

[3] Ibid.

pestilence there were but two survivors,[1] the Abbot Ceolfrid and one little boy, who had been brought up and trained by Ceolfrid, "and is still," says the Chronicler, "in that monastery as a priest, revered by all who know his life and writings." So these two, the abbot and the lad, the sole survivors, sang daily in their desolated church, with many tears, the psalms, but omitted the antiphons. This they did for a week, until they could bear it no longer, and then returned to their former practice, and bravely sang their antiphons, looking forward to the time when the less instructed should be advanced enough to join them, or the abbot should gather in brethren from without.

The terms of the reference to the lad as now a priest, revered by all who knew his life and writings, seem to settle beyond all doubt that the boy who sang the antiphons was Bede. He would have been by that time fourteen years of age.[2]

Between the church and library Bede's youth and manhood were spent. Benedict Biscop's munificence had made the library at Jarrow an oasis in the dreary wilderness of English ignorance. Jarrow was one of the earliest libraries of that great Benedictine order, the noble cultivators of learning to whom all Europe owes a debt which it does not always understand, and will certainly never repay. Bede evidently revelled in the learning stored in the monastic library. Some notion of the contents of the library at Jarrow may be gathered from various references scattered up and down the writings of Bede. Manuscripts of the Holy Scriptures and writings of the great Doctors

[1] "Hist. Abb. Gyrvondium," Anon. Appendix, Stephenson.

[2] Cf. *Church Quarterly Review*, No. 50. Art. Codex Amiatinus.

of the Church were, notwithstanding Jerome's warnings, side by side with pagan poetry.

The great Monastery of Jarrow as time went on became vastly changed from the days when the abbot and the child Bede struggled through the daily offices.[1] There were now six hundred monks within its walls, and among them doubtless men of learning and experience. One of Bede's teachers in Holy Scripture at Jarrow was Trumberct, a pupil of the gentle and saintly Chad,[2] Bishop of Lichfield.[3] It was from Trumberct's lips that Bede heard the story of Chad's devotions in a storm. Whoever else were teachers of Bede, the range of his studies was remarkably wide. Theology, Scripture, history, poetry, and music all formed part of his education; and, beside his native tongue, he was learned in Latin and Greek.

Bede was ordained deacon at the unusually early age of nineteen, by Bishop John of Beverley.[4] The next eleven years were spent in study. He became priest at thirty. The next twenty-nine years he studied the writings of the Fathers, and every branch of literature and science then known.

Bede's self-effacement is so complete that materials for his life are almost entirely wanting. Only by hint and implication and evident signs of personal eye-witness can be gathered in the most fragmentary way here and there impressions of his life and character. But Bede's descriptions give most interesting glimpses into the devotional and ritual practices of Jarrow.

[1] "Life of Ceolfrid."
[2] See March 2.
[3] Bede, "H. E.," iv. 3.
[4] Giles, liii.

When Abbot Ceolfrid, worn with austerities, grew old, he felt himself no longer possessed of the force and energy essential to a ruler of six hundred monks.[1] He sighed for freedom from the burden, and for space for calm meditation before the relics of the Apostles in Rome. Accordingly he resigned his office. Three days afterwards the Mass was sung early in the morning in the church of Mary the Mother of God, ever Virgin, and in the church of the Apostle Peter, and those who were present communicated with him. Then all gathered in S. Peter's Church. Ceolfrid burnt incense, and prayed at the altar, and standing on the altar-steps, he gave his blessing, holding the censer in his hand. Then they accompanied him to the shore. The deacons of the church, carrying lighted tapers and a golden crucifix, entered the boat with him. And when the river was past Ceolfrid kissed the cross, mounted his horse, and departed. The aged abbot was not destined to reach Italy, but died on the way. Of the time spent in devotion at Jarrow it was recorded that Ceolfrid, besides the canonical hours of prayer, said the entire Psalter twice through every day.

But Bede continued to the last in the convent where Ceolfrid had trained him. It was a calm, uneventful life, divided between study and devotion, or rather a life in which study was saturated with devotion. Bede's labours were chiefly three—his commentaries, his sermons, his History.

Bede writes his commentaries like a learned scribe, and it is very startling, considering the barbarous character of England at his age, to find passages like the following out of a house in the lonely wastes of Northumbria:—

[1] Bede, "Lives of the Holy Abbots."

"Luke the Evangelist, according to the traditions of the older writers, was exceedingly skilful in the science of medicine. He was more familiar with Greek literature than with Hebrew. His language, both in the Gospel and the Acts, is more ornate, and based upon models of secular eloquence, and he appeals to Greek originals rather than to Hebrew." [1]

Bede delights at once in the historic reality of Scripture and in the mystical interpretation. Questions of reading at times perplex him, for the manuscripts are found to differ.[2]

Bede's style as a preacher is deliberate, sententious. It does not flow, like the sermons of S. Bernard on the Canticles. There is nothing superfluous; much is condensed into each separate completed sentence. It is never impassioned, but calm.

But that which constitutes Bede's greatest claim on English affection is, of course, his "History." Bede's great historic work embraces the religious history of England over 134 years, from the coming of Augustine in 597 to 731. His inimitable gift of relating the stories of English religious life is partly natural, but owes its singular refinement and beauty to the earnest reverence which pervades his whole character. He "stamps the impress of his own intellect," still more of his own heart, "indelibly upon his writings." The writer's deep religious faith gives an indescribable charm to the pages of his History. If in recitals of the supernatural he shared in some respects the credulity of his age, yet this very defect,

[1] Bede's letter to Acca, "De Exposit. Act.," Giles, i. 185.
[2] "Hom.," p. 91.

if defect it be, does but emphasize the closeness and clearness to his mind of the spiritual inner world, while it also makes him reflect more faithfully the dominating temper of his age. Bede lies at the opposite pole from that school of history which finds in the visible and the natural an adequate explanation of the drift and meaning of human life.

In his historic work Bede's character is *scrupulous exactness.* "On almost every occasion he gives the name and designation of his informant; being anxious, apparently, to show that nothing is inserted for which he had not the testimony of some respectable witness. . . . He received secondary evidence with caution, for he distinguishes between the statements which he received from eye-witnesses and those which reached him through a succession of informants. In the last of these instances the channel of information is always pointed out with scrupulous exactness." [1]

Bede was deeply conscious of the value of history.[2] The lives of former great men, more particularly if fellow-countrymen with himself, were to Bede full of priceless warning and encouragement.

Bede's concluding words as he finished his History in the 731st year of our Lord's Incarnation breathed a fervent hope for the religious future of his people—"in Whose reign may the earth ever rejoice; may Britain exult in the profession of His Faith; and may many islands be glad and sing praises in honour of His holiness." [3]

When Bede finished his History he wrote this prayer:—

[1] Cf. Stephenson's Bede, I. xxx. [2] "H. E.," Preface.
[3] "H. E.," V. xxiii.

"And now I beseech Thee, good Jesus, that unto him whom Thou hast mercifully given to receive with joy the words of Thy wisdom and Thy knowledge, Thou wilt also grant at the last to come unto Thee, the Fountain of all Wisdom, and appear alway before Thy face, Who livest and reignest God for ever and ever. Amen."

Bede was no mere lover of the past. He was equally keen to advance the Church of the present. It may, indeed, be said that he wrote his History so that the errors of the past might be the makings of the present, and the saintly lives departed the inspiring ideals of the days that should be. He earnestly impressed upon his age the duty of perfecting the Church within.

He writes that King Ceolwulph should be advised to make the ecclesiastical organizations of the nation more complete *by consecrating more bishops*,[1] and points out that Pope Gregory's original plan in the letters to Augustine was to create an Archbishop of York with twelve suffragans. Bede thinks that the funds required for this should be taken from some of the monasteries, not all of which served their purpose or were even a credit to the religious life. To advance the spiritual life of the English Church Bede strongly recommends the use of the sign of the cross and a daily Communion. "How salutary it is for all classes of Christians to participate daily in the Body and Blood of our Lord, as you know well is done by Christian Churches throughout Italy, Gaul, Africa, Greece, and all the countries of the East! Now, this kind of religion and heavenly devotion through the neglect of our teachers has been so long discontinued among almost

[1] Giles, i. 123.

all the laity of our province, that those who seem to be the most religious among them communicate in the Holy Mysteries only on the day of our Lord's Birth, the Epiphany, and Easter." [1]

Bede's life was not continued long after the conclusion of his History. His great work was finished in 731; he died in 735.[2] A witness of his last hours says that a fortnight before the Ascension he was much troubled with shortness of breath, yet without pain, but daily read lessons to his disciples, and spent the remainder of the day in singing psalms. His nights were sleepless, or nearly so, and spent in giving thanks to God with uplifted hands. "I declare with truth," adds the biographer, "that I have never seen with my eyes, nor heard with my ears, any man so earnest in giving thanks to the living God." [3]

Evidently each sentence vibrated with awestruck reality as it issued from the dying lips of Bede; whether it was the language of Scripture, or English poems, or later hymns, it came upon his pupil Cuthbert's ear with indelible impressiveness.

"He chanted the sentence of the Apostle S. Paul, 'It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.'" [4] He entreated his pupils to remember the hour of their death. He repeated to them in their native Anglo-Saxon speech a hymn of departure about the "need-fare"—the inevitable departure of the soul. He sang their familiar antiphons—

[1] Giles, i. 135. [2] Bede's "Chronol.," Giles, p. 323.
[3] Cuthbert's letter on the death of Bede, Giles, i. 79.
[4] Cuthbert's letter; Heb. x. 31.

"O glorious King, Lord of all power,
Who, triumphing this Day,[1]
Didst ascend above all the Heavens;
Leave us not comfortless."

And then he burst into tears, and wept copiously. And an hour after he began again. "By turns we read and by turns we wept, nay, we wept always whilst we read."

Like S. Augustine, Bede recalled one of the last sayings of the dying Ambrose, "I have not lived so as to be ashamed to live among you; nor do I fear to die, for God is gracious."[2]

And Bede worked on to the very last. He was engaged in a translation of the Gospel of S. John from the Greek into Anglo-Saxon. The time was short. Bede passed all day dictating. "Go on quickly," said he. "I know not how long I shall hold out, or whether my Master will not soon take me away."

"Dear master," said the young scribe at the third hour of the day, "there is still one chapter wanting. But does it not weary you to be troubled with further questions?"

Out of the increasing infirmities of approaching death came the calm answer, "It does not trouble me. Take your pen, and write quickly." So Bede dictated for six hours more. At the ninth hour he paused. "Run quickly," he said, "and bring the priests of our monastery to me, that I may distribute among them the gifts which God has bestowed on me." Bede had no possessions save a little pepper and napkins and incense. So he gave his counsels, and entreated their prayers when he was dead. But they all mourned and wept, especially because he

[1] Ascension. [2] Cuthbert's letter.

said they would never see his face again in this world. "It is time that I return to Him Who created me out of nothing. I have lived long. My merciful Judge well foresaw my life for me. The time of my dissolution draws nigh."

The evening was come. The boy said, "Dear master, there is yet one more sentence not written."

"Write quickly," answered Bede.

Soon after the boy said, "It is finished."

Bede replied, "It is well; you have said the truth. It is finished indeed."

And, worn out with illness and toil, Bede lay on the pavement of his cell, resting his head in his pupil's arms, and turned towards the place where he was wont to pray. And so in extreme simplicity he said the Gloria, and when he had spoken the Name of the Holy Ghost he breathed his last, and so departed to the heavenly kingdom.[1]

The life of Bede is the life of a scholar—of the first Englishman who became a scholar, the first to understand the dignity of a life of devotion and study, of study sanctified and fertilized by devotion; a man of books, most at home in a library, spending his whole career observing the hours of the Church and studying the Holy Scriptures, ever occupied either in learning, teaching, or writing.[2]

Bede's conspicuous characteristic is that of the lover of tradition, eschewing originality in doctrine as a certain proof of error, desiring to give nothing to his own age for which he had not ample authority in the Christian centuries. He acknowledges, he rejoices to acknowledge, his indebtedness to the great teachers of the past. He says, for

[1] Ascension Day, May 26, 735. [2] J. R. Green, "Making of England."

example, that in his expositions on S. John's Epistle he is little more than a terse condenser of Augustine's sweetness, long drawn out, although he has added a few things of his own.[1]

The guiding principle of all Bede's studies and teachings may be found in a phrase of his own: *Patrum vestigia sequens*, "Following in the footsteps of the Fathers."[2]

The singular graciousness of Bede's character has fascinated men ever since. Readers of most widely different type have kindled into enthusiasm over the spiritual refinement and calm gentle beauty of the Northumbrian student-saint, the benign, devout, the father of English History, whose image shines out from the lonely convent-library seclusion, all the more pure and bright by contrast with the dark background of prevailing outer ignorance and barbarity.

[1] Giles, i. 180. [2] Ibid., i. 196.

June 1

S. Nicomede

OF S. Nicomede scarcely anything is known for certain. All that can be said with any approach to probability is that he lived at Rome during the apostolic age, and in time of persecution showed his courage and his faith by giving Christian burial to one of the martyrs, notwithstanding Imperial prohibitions. For this act Nicomede was arrested, and on refusing to sacrifice to the pagan divinities was scourged even to death with whips loaded with lead. His body was thrown into the Tiber, whence it was rescued by a brother priest. The later legends which accumulated round his name have merited the following severe judgment from the Bollandist compilers of the Acts of the Saints: "The surviving account is nothing more than the work of a skilless person, more intent on compiling marvels than on describing facts." But S. Nicomede was held in high esteem from early times, especially in Rome.

June 5

S. Boniface

S. BONIFACE, the Apostle of Germany, originally named Winfrid, was of Saxon birth. His native place was Crediton, in Devonshire. He was educated in a monastic school near Exeter. As a child he eagerly desired the religious life, and confided to his father that this was his ambition. The father listened to his son's desire with surprise and repugnance, and strove to divert him from his aim. A secular career was the father's ambition for the lad, but a higher ruling had ordered it otherwise. After much resistance his father gave consent, and Boniface entered a monastery near Winchester. There he displayed an eager love for study, and devoted himself to meditation and prayer. Thus by holy thoughts and serious pursuits he strengthened himself against the passions of youth, and by the grace of God was enabled to conquer the incentives to selfish and worldly life. His learning became considerable, both in Holy Scripture and in secular literature; he gained great facility of expression both in verse and prose. In course of time his attractive preaching drew many to the House

to be instructed in the Holy Scripture and the things of Faith. He was ordained priest while in the monastery near Winchester, and was expressly invited by Ina, King of the West Saxons, to attend a council held by Bretwald, Archbishop of Canterbury.

Boniface thus already occupied a position of great usefulness in the Church at home. But his heart was set elsewhere. What he longed for above all things was not the consolidation of a Church already founded, but the labours of a mission in other lands. He was filled with the missionary spirit. And the portion of the mission field upon which his mind was fixed was that soil from which the Saxon race had come, the coast of Germany, the region which bears the name of Saxony.

Boniface was not destined for the calm seclusion and reflective life of the cloister; his sphere was the active and energetic, the life of practical administration. He came up from his monastery to London, "a centre of merchandise" in the seventh century, as his biographer calls it; "an emporium of many peoples coming by land and sea," as S. Bede describes it.[1] From London Boniface set sail to Frisia (Holland), and came to Utrecht, about A.D. 716.

The Frisian duke, Radbod, being fiercely engaged at that moment in exterminating Christianity and restoring paganism, was in no mood to listen to the missionary from England. Consequently, after an unavailing interview, Boniface returned to spend the winter in his own land.

Once more in England and in the monastic retreat,

[1] Bede, ii. 3.

Boniface was cordially welcomed by his old associates. During that winter the abbot died, and the community, with one consent, entreated Boniface to become their superior, but he could not be induced to forego his cherished aim.[1] Necessity was laid upon him to preach the Faith far away. So when the winter was passed and the spring shone out again, the old longing came upon him stronger than ever to arise and go forth and deliver the message of the Gospel of his Lord.

S. Boniface sought the approval of the Bishop of the West Saxons,[2] Bishop Daniel of Winchester, who gave him commendatory letters both to the Churches abroad and especially to the Bishop at Rome, and after waiting to see a new abbot elected for the monastery, he set sail from London, and landed in France. Boniface was never again to see his native land. By this time winter fell, and he visited the Churches in France, spending much time therein in prayer. At length, when the winter was over, he crossed the Alps, found a welcome from the Lombards, and eventually reached the threshold of the Apostles. There he had an interview with Pope Gregory II., to whom he told the purpose of his journey.[3] The Pope listened with gladness, read the letter which Boniface brought from Bishop Daniel of Winchester, and finally gave his authority to Boniface to go as missionary to the German people.[4] Armed with this authority, Boniface descended the Alps, entered the district of Bavaria, and thence passed on to Saxony (Thuringia). The religious state of Saxony he found to be deplorable.

[1] Bede, v. 612. [2] Ibid., v. 19.
[3] First visit to Rome, ? A.D. 719. Bede, v. 613. [4] Bede, v. 614.

Priests and people alike had sunk into a depraved condition, and the principles of the Christian practice were ignored or forgotten. But while at work in Saxony, when the news came suddenly of Radbod's death, he turned at once to the land where he first sought to centre his missionary zeal.[1] In Friesland he found Charles Martel victorious and ruling, and attached himself to Willibrord, Bishop of Utrecht, with whom he laboured three years. Willibrord was becoming old, and when he saw the force and energy of Boniface he aspired to have him as successor in his see.[2] But Boniface declined. He represented that he was not yet forty years old, and too young for the burden of the office. But when the charge was urgently pressed upon him he explained that he was sent as a missionary of the Apostolic See to the German people, and must not be permanently diverted from his appointed sphere. Thus Boniface left them, and returned to Saxony, where his power became very great. He pushed forward through Saxony to the Hessi, a remote pagan tribe on the borderland towards the north, delivered to them the Christian Faith, and was permitted to baptize great numbers. Boniface sent a message to Rome to report his progress, and by way of assurance was himself summoned to appear in the Eternal City.

This was Boniface's second visit to Rome.[3] Through the territory of the Franks and Burgundians Boniface reached the Alps and Rome, and knelt in the Church of S. Peter. Pope Gregory II. asked priest Boniface about his Faith. Boniface asked permission to write down his creed, which he did, and presented it before the Pope in the Lateran.

[1] A.D. 719. [2] Bede, v. 615. [3] A.D. 723.

Gregory then told him that he wished to consecrate him Bishop of the German people, and on S. Andrew's Day he received his consecration in Rome. He was assigned no definite see, but left free to advance as circumstance should prove best.[1]

Boniface then returned to Saxony. He confirmed many of the Hessi. But idolatry still continued. The central outward object of Hessian reverence was a venerable oak. Boniface felt that the destruction of that tree would be the deathblow of paganism among them. Accordingly, he determined publicly to cut it down. There was a great crowd of pagans gathered round their sacred tree when Boniface approached for its destruction. They looked on with anger, and cursed the enemy of their gods, but apparently, for whatever reason, took no measures for the tree's protection. Blow after blow fell on the sacred oak. The pagans watched in silence, momentarily expecting some outbreak of the wrath of their divinities. But when the great tree shivered, staggered, fell, and broke into four large fragments, the strength of Hessian paganism fell with it; the natives forsook the gods who offered no resistance, and came over in crowds to the Christian Faith.

Boniface did not burn the sacred oak or destroy its branches. He determined to convert it to the service of better things. He built an oratory of the wood, so that the substance which formerly represented an imperfect religion should now be rendered subservient to the perfect Faith. This Christian oratory he dedicated to the Apostle S. Peter.

The Hessian district was situated on the edge of the

[1] See Letters.

North Sea, dividing the kingdom of Saxony from the kingdom of the Franks. Thus its geographical position was of great importance from a missionary point of view. The Franks were Christians; Boniface had their support in his work among the Hessians. And now that the Hessians were more or less in the fold of the Church, Boniface pushed on further north, and re-entered the territory of the Saxons, where his previous labours had been but partially successful.

Boniface was not the first to attempt the conversion of Saxony. But the Christianity of the fatherland of the Anglo-Saxon people was of a very disordered and imperfect sort, and error of serious description had taken the place of the Catholic Truth.[1] Boniface here found scope for all his energies. Resisted and hindered in every way by the local clergy, who should have supported him, he pushed on with undaunted courage and tenacity of purpose. His work had by this time become known widely through Europe; and from England there came not only cordial admiration and sympathy, but reinforcements of religious, both men and women, whom he required for the support and the advancement of his work. Then monasteries rose in Saxony, small communities in various places, possibly insignificant numerically, yet most valuable as centres of religious life and Christian activity.[1]

He built two monastic churches, the one at Fritzbar, the other at Homburg in Hesse, dedicating the former to S. Peter and S. Paul, the latter to S. Michael the Archangel. In A.D. 731 Pope Gregory III. sent him an archbishop's pall.

Boniface made a third visit to Rome about A.D. 738. Some

[1] Cf. "Dict. Biogr.," *s.v.* "Boniface," p. 325.

twenty years of absorbing, incessant energy had elapsed since Boniface's first visit there. The obscure priest, entering Rome alone, and presenting himself with his bishop's commendatory letters, was now the well-known archbishop, with his retinue of Franks, Bavarians, and Englishmen, and others from the various provinces beneath his spiritual rule. Boniface was received in Rome with great honour by Gregory III., and returned laden with relics of the saints. His return was marked by labours in Bavaria. Here he was well received by Duke Odilo, and in the exercise of his archiepiscopal authority founded four bishoprics—Saltzburg, Freisingen, Passau, and Ratisbon, or Regensburg, and made Maintz his archiepiscopal see.[1]

"But power and dignity were not the ruling passions of Boniface."[2] He threw off all the pomp and authority of the Primate of Germany to become again the humble apostle. He was reserved for the crown of martyrdom. He longed once more for the Apostolic life and labours. Accordingly he resigned his see to Lull, one of his English disciples, confiding to him the work which he had created, and expressing his earnest desire to become a simple missionary again before the close came. He spoke of his death with an evident foreboding, and gave directions for his burial in the monastic precincts of Fulda, the most distinguished of his foundations. He even indicated where the shroud lay in which his body was to be enfolded.[3]

Then he descended from his metropolitan city, divested

[1] "Dict. Biogr." [2] Milman, "L. C.," ii. 303.
[3] Ibid., ii. 627.

of all his dignity and power, came down to the Rhine, and ascended the river until he came to the marshy lands of Frisia, the country which he had entered as a simple priest at the beginning of his missionary labours. Through all Frisia he passed again, full of force and energy, preaching everywhere, and for the emblems of paganism substituting those of the Christian Faith. Multitudes came to him at Utrecht—men, women, children—and with his little band of disciples he baptized them all. But when in the depths of Frisia he was gathering together from far and near his converts to confirm them, on the very day of this Sacrament the pagan natives armed themselves and surrounded him. His little band of followers would have resisted to shield his life, but he bade them use no violence. So Boniface and his missionaries died. And the pagans fought each other for the possession of the scanty spoils, and slew each other over the dead bodies of their martyr apostles.

His body was laid in the monastery at Fulda, in accordance with his own desire.

June 17

S. Alban

IF the Church had many martyrs in Britain at the first introduction of the Faith, their names are not known on earth. Out of the general uncertainty one name, at any rate, stood luminously clear to the contemporaries of S. Bede, the name of S. Alban.[1] Some spent wave of the Diocletian persecution reached, it was said, this land; and although Constantius, under whose rule this portion of the Empire lay, was favourably disposed towards believers in Christ, yet it would seem that he could not altogether protect them from the consequences of Diocletian's laws. A certain Christian priest, fugitive from his persecutors, came to seek shelter at Alban's hospitable door. Alban, although a pagan, readily received him; and when he saw the priest given to devotion night and day, his human pity deepened into reverence, and his heart was drawn with longing to hear of the Christian's faith.

So Alban found the way from darkness into light; he laid aside the pagan idolatries, and became a firm believer in Jesus Christ. A few days passed, and the persecutors

[1] Bede, I., vii.

traced the priest to Alban's house. Then Alban disguised himself in the priest's clothes, and was led bound before the magistrate. When Alban's substitution of himself for the priest was discovered, the magistrate, being enraged, declared that he who sheltered a despiser of the gods rather than yield him to the penalties deserved, must himself endure those penalties.

But Alban, who frankly owned himself a Christian before the enemies of the Christian Faith, could not be moved by the threats of heathen power. The magistrate asked him his name.

"Never mind my name," replied Alban. "I am a Christian."

The magistrate insisted. "I was called Alban by my parents," was the answer, "but I worship the one true and living God, Who created all things."

Alban refused to sacrifice. He was cruelly scourged by the torturers, but endured with patience, nay, even with joy. So Alban was led out to death.

There was a great multitude of witnesses, men and women of every age. On the way to death the executioner was so impressed by Alban's faith that he threw away his sword, and knelt at the martyr's feet, desiring himself to be slain with him whom they bade him slay.

Then, where a hill arose flower-clad and beautiful, did Alban bow his head to the death-stroke, and enter the ranks of the martyred ones. And after that the persecution ceased.

What became of the priest whom Alban concealed, and whose faith he learnt, we are not told. Vicarious sacrifice

runs through everything in nature and in grace. Certainly the Neophyte entered the Presence whether or not the priest remained without.

In S. Alban we witness the sudden transfiguration of a Neophyte, and his elevation to the heights of martyrdom. In this, more wonderfully than S. Stephen, he goes straight up from paganism to the Throne of Light. The words which S. Peter Chrysologus, the eloquent court preacher of Ravenna, applied to S. Stephen may be fairly applied to S. Alban also: "Obscure in place, but lofty in faith, he was a mere disciple in rank, but a master by example."[1]

[1] Sermon, 210, In Fest. S. Stephan.

June 20

Translation of S. Edward, King of West Sarons

[*See March* 18.]

July 2

Visitation of the Blessed Virgin Mary

THE number of festivals of the Virgin appointed in the Calendar of the English Church is a fact which does not always receive the attention it deserves. There are no less than five—the festival of the Conception, of the Nativity, of the Annunciation, of the Visitation, and of the Purification, or Presenting of Christ in the Temple.

The festival of the Visitation is historically of very late introduction. It was instituted by Pope Urban VI. in the year 1389, but it merely commemorates a purely scriptural fact, the visit of S. Mary to Elisabeth.[1]

I. The message of the Incarnation had been spoken, and Gabriel takes his flight back to the Throne of God. Mary arose, and went with haste from her home to the hill country of Judæa on a visit to her cousin Elisabeth. When Elisabeth saw her on the threshold of her house she uttered the salutation, "Whence is this to me, that the Mother of my Lord should come to me?" Elisabeth was the elder woman, and probably, as a priest's wife, held a social position superior to that occupied by Mary. But Elisabeth knows that Mary is the Mother of the great

[1] Baronius, "Annals."

Deliverer, the Mother of the King; and all she can think of is the honour accorded her in this visit of the Virgin to her house. If only the world understood Mary's prerogative, she would surely be welcomed in the greatest homes in Israel. And whence is this to me, that I should be singled out for this distinction, that the Mother of the Christ should enter my lowly dwelling? Whence is this to me that the Mother of my Lord should come to me?

II. The Mother of my Lord—what thoughts it opens out in the world's training for the Incarnation!

There were three main types of national character existing in the age when Christ was born. There was, first, *the nation of power*—the Roman people; the practical, the rulers of men, the founders and consolidators of Empire, men of world-wide dominion, enormous wealth, enormous power. And it is surely most significant that the Son of God was not born among these.

There was, secondly, *the nation of intellect*—the Greek; highly cultured, clever, versatile, brilliant, marvellous in art and sculpture, in poetry, the lovers of the beautiful. And the Son of God did not enter human history among these.

It is, in fact, inconceivable that He should have appeared either among Roman or Greek, for there could be no adequate training for the Holy Childhood in heathen surroundings. The aspirations of His heart could have met with no response. The inward illuminations would have been externally refuted. The Incarnation demanded a proper sphere in which that human development might find its scope unhindered.

Then there was a third people in the age of Christianity

conspicuous neither for power nor yet for intellect, yet conspicuous in their own way for their special gifts. They were the *people of revelation*, the people of faith. Chosen out of all the earth, the one people on earth in possession of a clear and definite revelation of eternal Truth. We may rightly say that Israel was selected in order that Truth might have a home on earth. But we may also say that Israel was chosen to prepare the way for the Incarnation of the Son of God. The law was written in order that the Child Jesus might know it. The psalmists were inspired in order that His Sacred Childhood might be familiarized from without with thoughts of heaven. The prophets wrote in order to speak to the mind and imagination of Jesus Christ, to indicate the lines of His Divinely ordered way. The Temple was built in order that the Child Jesus might hear far-off echoes of the heavenly realm, might find His Father's praises sung on earth, His Father's House whereto He might resort.

And the providence which chose the nation determined also the Home where the Son of God should be trained and taught as a human child. Plainly it must be a home of faith, a home of professed devotion, a home calculated to help the Holy Childhood. To our minds the long discipline and development of Israel through prophet, priest, and king, during fifteen hundred years, culminates at last in the lowly Virgin of Galilee.

III. Two thoughts are here suggested in reference to the Mother of our Lord.

The one is *her human relationship to Him*. She was chosen out of all women for the highest honour which can be granted to a creature. From her He took the

Blood which He shed for the saving of the world. Of her He received that which for her He sacrificed. And when she said "My God" she was speaking to her Son, and when she said "My Son" she was addressing her God. He created her, yet He obeyed her. She was His creature, yet He lay a helpless infant in her arms. Language fails altogether to do justice to this unique relationship, the fact can only be expressed in paradox, and seems to revel in apparent contradiction. This is the first glory of Mary —she is the Mother of my Lord.

But that first glory would not avail her without a second, which is *her spiritual resemblance to Him.*

> "Joy to be Mother of the Lord,
> And Thine the truer bliss,
> In every thought, and deed, and word
> To be for ever His."

The festival of the Visitation is distinguished because it challenges no controversy anywhere in Christendom; it is obscured by no legend, and compromised by no uncertainties. It rests on solid fact, on history which has the highest sanction, that of Inspiration.

July 4

Translation of S. Martin

[*See November* 11.]

July 15

S. Swithun

SWITHUN was born probably near Winchester, about the year 800. The invasions of the Danes were drawing together the Saxon kingdoms into closer and firmer unity, and King Egbert wrought nobly both for consolidation and defence. But learning was no longer cultivated in the land as in former days, and bishops were now to be found at the head of armed forces, more familiar with the tactics of war than with proclaiming the gospel of peace.

But Swithun was of a nobler type. He was sent by his parents at an early age to the monastery of Winchester, where in course of time Helmstan, the bishop, ordained him priest. Elected as head of the monastery, his reputation for sanctity and practical capability was widely extended. King Egbert himself conferred with him in matters of state, and entrusted him with the education of Ethelwulf, his younger son.

The character of Swithun so impressed the young prince, that he sought to devote himself to the priestly life, and was actually ordained sub-deacon, and enrolled among the clergy of the Cathedral Church. But the sub-deacon of

Winchester was destined for the English throne.[1] His elder brother died, and Ethelwulf, becoming heir apparent, was summoned from the monastery to the world, a papal dispensation enabled him to marry, and the cloistered prince became father of Alfred the Great.

After a reign of thirty-seven years Egbert died, leaving the kingdom to Ethelwulf, with a solemn injunction not to destroy by natural indolence a realm consolidated by consummate industry. When Helmstan died Ethelwulf placed his old tutor in the bishopric of Winchester. As bishop of the royal city Swithun exercised a powerful influence over the throne.

Ethelwulf, being "naturally indolent and apathetic," "a poor substitute for his father," [2] needed the rousing influence of an able, wise, and energetic mind. All this he had in the person of Swithun. Ethelwulf had the wisdom to appreciate what he did not possess, and permitted himself to be influenced, although not to be overruled. The king's conduct bears evident marks of Swithun's energy, and Ethelwulf's deeply religious character was the reward of Swithun's devotion during the early cloistered life which king and bishop spent together. Swithun was anything but the political ecclesiastic. On the contrary, he "trained his master to heavenly pursuits." [3]

Swithun's life as bishop was marked by simplicity and unworldliness. He spent much time in prayer and little in sleep. He was to a peculiar degree spiritually minded. He shrank from secular display, which the increasing wealth and power of bishops made the common

[1] A.D. 837. [2] Wm. Malmesbury. [3] Ibid.

temptation of his day. He would not even ride on horseback lest he should appear to separate himself from the poor, but walked barefoot, and, to avoid the charge of ostentation, made many of his journeyings at night. He was most lavish in his hospitality to the poor, but he would not have his acts of generosity known. He delighted in rebuilding the churches and in repairing the ravages of former generations.

Ethelwulf's love of the Catholic religion, which he was not permitted to serve as a priest, found its consummation in a most noble act of generosity by which he devoted a tenth part of his private estates to ecclesiastical purposes. The charter containing this gift was placed on the high altar in the Cathedral of Winchester in the presence of Swithun.[1]

S. Swithun died in 862. With characteristic humility he gave strict injunctions that his body should not be laid to rest within the cathedral walls, but outside, where the feet of men might tread upon it and the rain from heaven fall.

His last will was obeyed for a while, but afterwards the deep reverence of the people would not suffer it, and the body was translated to a costly shrine within the sacred walls.

[1] See Collier, Fuller,

July 20

S. Margaret

S. MARGARET, known in the Greek Church as S. Marina, was greatly venerated in the East and West from early times. Nothing whatever is known for certain of her life. She was a virgin of Antioch in Pisidia, and was martyred possibly during the third century, and towards its close.

We have here nothing beyond a name rescued from the oblivion into which untold numbers of martyred and saintly souls have, so far as the Church on earth is concerned, retreated.

July 22

S. Mary Magdalene

THE identification of Mary Magdalene with the woman which was a sinner, and whose penitence is recorded in S. Luke vii., is a long-standing opinion in Christendom. The earliest reference to it, as far as the present writer is aware, occurs in the title to a sermon of S. Peter Chrysologus, Archbishop of Ravenna about 450. But this evidence is not quite certain, as in some manuscripts the name is omitted. The identification, although by no means accepted without challenge by S. Ambrose, S. Augustine, and S. Jerome, was rendered popular chiefly through the authority and influence of S. Gregory the Great.

Roughly speaking, it may be said that while the Western Church has tended to identify the two, the Eastern has tended to distinguish them; which is equivalent to saying that the Church, as a whole, has not adopted either view.

The first scriptural mention of this saint by name occurs in S. Luke viii., where among those delivered from maladies by Christ is mentioned "Mary called Magdalene, out of whom went seven devils." Some understood the words of mental, others of moral malady. If the latter

be the true interpretation, it would harmonize exactly with the view which identifies Magdalene with the woman which was a sinner.

She is, at any rate, found with the women accompanying our Lord in the Galilæan ministry.[1] She followed Him from Galilee to Jerusalem. She was a witness of His Crucifixion, among the "many women beholding afar off."[2] She was also present at the funeral of Jesus Christ.[3]

She was one of the first on Easter morning to find her way from the Holy City to the Garden Grave. If we attempt to combine the different narratives, we are told that a group of women started together for the Holy Sepulchre.[4] We are not told, but it is most probable that Mary Magdalene, in the eagerness of her love and devotion, swiftly distanced the others, as S. John outran S. Peter later in the day, and so entered first into the Garden; and seeing the stone was already removed, waited for nothing else, but returned to Jerusalem, bringing her breathless message to the two Apostles, "They have taken away the Lord out of the sepulchre, and we know not where they have laid Him."[5]

S. John and S. Peter both visited the sepulchre after receiving Mary Magdalene's announcement. Both gazed on the same facts, and the one "departed wondering," while the other "saw and believed;" but both returned to their home in Jerusalem. Magdalene alone remained at the grave. "But Mary stood without at the sepulchre, weeping."[6] According to Bishop Andrewes's striking

[1] S. Luke viii. 3. [2] S. Matt. xxvii. 55; S. Mark xvi. 40.
[3] S. Matt. xxvii. 61; S. Mark xv. 47; and S. Luke xxiii. 55.
[4] See Liddon, Easter Sermon 2.
[5] S. John xx. 2. [6] S. John xx. 11.

analysis of this incident, our thoughts are directed to Mary, the Angels, and Christ.[1]

1. There is Mary. (1) Mary stood by the grave, where we love not to stand—love beside the grave; (2) Mary remained while others went their way, which is love constant while others fail; (3) Mary wept, which is love sorrowing; (4) Mary looked in, which is love seeking.

2. There are the angels, of whom may be noted (1) their place—in the grave; (2) their habit—in white, the emblem of joy; (3) their attitude—seated, signifying rest; (4) their order—at the head and at the feet.

Then comes the question of the angels, "Woman, why weepest thou?" and Mary's heartbroken reply, "Because they have taken away my Lord, and I know not where they have laid Him."

The vision of angels did not move her in the least. The suddenness, the strangeness, the glory of the sight has no influence on Magdalene. She is as if she did not see them. No man on earth, no angel in heaven, can comfort her; none but He that is taken away. Christ, and none but Christ, can comfort her; and until she find Him again her soul refuseth comfort, yea, even from the angels of Heaven.[2]

3. Then there is our Lord Himself, with the same question as the angels.

"But to Christ she seems somewhat more harsh than to the angels. To them she complains of others—'they have taken.' Christ she seems to charge, or at least to suspect of the fact. . . . But pardon love. As it fears

[1] Bishop Andrewes, Sermon 14. [2] Ibid.

where it needs not, so it suspects oft where it hath no cause. The love she bare to Him, and the sorrow she had for Him, may excuse her with Him if she err concerning Him." [1]

Christ's only answer is to call her by her name. The Good Shepherd knoweth His own sheep, and calleth them by name, and that calling her by her name recalls her to herself and to instant recognition of the spiritual facts before her. In a moment she is at His Feet, uttering her word of reverence, ready to clasp and hold Him fast.

But Magdalene's attempt to hold Him fast was prevented by those difficult and unexpected words: "Touch Me not, for I am not yet ascended." Plainly this *prohibition* involves some special reason; for Christ allowed the other women to touch Him, and expressly invited S. Thomas so to do. Why was Magdalene denied what was granted to others? That is the difficulty. And the difficulty is enhanced by the explanation, "for I am not yet ascended." If she might not touch Him now, surely it might seem she could not touch Him then.

Three interpretations are given by Bishop Andrewes [2] of these words, derived from three saintly writers—Chrysostom, Gregory, Augustine.

1. S. Chrysostom thinks that the prohibition, "Touch Me not," was intended to correct a want of reverence. She failed to realize the regard due to His newly glorified estate.

2. S. Gregory thinks that it was done to hasten her visit to the Apostles. Christ would rather she went to

[1] Bishop Andrewes, p. 18. [2] Sermon 15.

His brethren than remained in devotion. The disciples sat in darkness and sorrow; delay to announce the Resurrection must for their sakes be avoided. In that case the words "For I am not yet ascended" would mean that Magdalene need not wait for acts of devotion—she could do these another time—for the Ascension was not yet.

3. S. Augustine thinks that the "Touch Me not" was intended to raise her mind from material contact to spiritual communion. When the Son of Man had ascended where He was before, a permanent spiritual communion with Him would be granted her.

But the prohibition was not all the answer which Magdalene received: "Go to My brethren, and say unto them, I ascend." There was a *mission* imposed, and a *message* to deliver.[1]

(1) A mission—"Go to My brethren." He is not ashamed to call them brethren, notwithstanding their recent forsaking Him.[2] Brethren implies (*a*) identity of nature: He is human still; (*b*) identity of affection: His love is unchanged.

(2) A message—"Say unto them, I ascend." This is the gospel of Mary Magdalene. The Ascension involves that the Resurrection is a fact. He cannot ascend unless He has risen.[3]

Moreover, the Resurrection is not an end in itself; Christ rose in order to ascend.[4] And, further, He makes them of the nature of the Resurrection life. It is not a return to the old conditions. He ascends.

[1] Bishop Andrewes, Sermon 16.
[2] Ibid., p. 43.
[3] Cf. Ibid., p. 25.
[4] Ibid., p. 46.

So Magdalene went in haste upon her mission to proclaim to the perplexed eleven the gospel of the Ascension: "I ascend unto My Father, and your Father; and to My God, and your God."

From that time, her message delivered, Mary Magdalene's name is found no more in the New Testament page. Henceforward her life is hid with Christ in God.

July 26

S. Anne

THE name of the mother of the Blessed Virgin Mary is not recorded in Scripture, nor does any mention occur in surviving ecclesiastical literature until the close of the fourth century.[1] From that period onward statements increase, but not certainty. On the other hand, the Emperor Justinian is said to have dedicated a church by her name in Constantinople; and the observance of the feast of S. Anne is ancient both in East and West.[2] But it was not imposed by authority until A.D. 1584, when Gregory XIII. made its observance universal.

In the sermons of S. Peter Damian there is a curious and instructive passage on the parents of the Blessed Virgin Mary.

"Some, while attempting to know more than they ought to know, spend fruitless labour on inquiring who was the father or who was the mother of Blessed Mary. It is useless to seek what the evangelist thought it needless to narrate. For had he believed that the knowledge would have been profitable for us, the sacred historian

[1] About A.D. 368, by S. Epiphanius. [2] Baronius.

would never have passed in silence over so necessary information."[1]

A later writer[2] thinks it well to qualify these words by reminding us that the Church, both in East and West, has for centuries generally accepted the opinion that the names of her parents are known.

[1] Sermon 46.

[2] Benedict XIV.

August 1

Lammas Day

LAMMAS DAY is said to derive this form of its name from an Anglo-Saxon practice of offering loaves of the new corn upon this festival. Hence it was popularly called Loaf Mass, or Lammas. Other derivations are given, but they are less probable. Accordingly, Lammas Day was a kind of mediæval Harvest Thanksgiving, concerned, however, with the beginning of the harvest rather than with its completed ingathering. It corresponded to the Feast of Pentecost rather than to that of Tabernacles.

What the day actually commemorates is the deliverance of S. Peter from prison, recorded in Acts xii. The real name of the festival is *S. Peter ad Vincula*—"S. Peter's Chains." So it stands in the Roman Breviary, where the lection appointed is the account of the falling off of S. Peter's chains when the angel bade him rise up in the prison.

August 6

Transfiguration

LEARNED men cannot tell us for certain the date when the Transfiguration of our Lord began to be annually observed as a festival. It would seem to have risen locally as a natural and spontaneous act of devotion, and gradually to have made its way across centuries to universal observance. The statement sometimes made that the festival was introduced by Pope Callixtus in 1457 is certainly mistaken. Sermons preached on the Transfiguration by the early Fathers would not, of course, necessarily involve the observance of any such festival.[1] And titles such as "on the Feast of the Transfiguration" might easily be added in later centuries by those who assumed the practice of earlier ages to have been identical with their own. A sermon by the Venerable Bede bears the title "On the Feast of our Lord's Transfiguration."[2] And there is a hymn by S. John of Damascus (eighth century) apparently written for this day. The observance of the day was widely extended in the East, for it is found in the Calendars of the Armenian Church (July 14), and of the Byzantine and Æthiopic. The history of the festival in the

[1] See S. Leo, Sermon 51.

[2] Bede, Works, vol. v.

Western Church is difficult to trace. Durandus, the famous liturgical writer of the thirteenth century, places it among the festivals of the Church.[1] But, undoubtedly, what gave impetus to its observance was the act of Pope Callixtus in 1457, who, because the Mohammedans were defeated by the Crusaders at Belgrade on the 6th of August, which had long been kept as the Festival of the Transfiguration, ordered the day to be kept thenceforward with special honour.[2]

"Whenever the 6th of August comes round one is apt to wonder why the Reformers in the reign of Edward the Sixth suppressed the Festival of the Transfiguration. It was not, indeed, a festival of great antiquity, but for centuries it had been observed in England, according to the most widely extended of English ritual 'Uses,' by way of express and solemn homage to the Divine Majesty of our Lord, as manifested in a Biblical event. Perhaps it may have been thought that, as that event was not associated with any particular gift or blessing, the memorial of it might be dropped without loss. If so, we may well think that the view was superficial, and that the withdrawal of the day from the list of English Church holy days has thus far impoverished the Prayer-book. The American Church has recently restored the festival, and provided it with a newly composed Collect, an Epistle,[3] and a Gospel from S. Luke's account of the wonderful scene on the mountain height." [4]

The Transfiguration is no mere subordinate incident in the Redemptive Life, but one of its highest experiences,

[1] See **Rationale.**
[2] See **Fleury, vol. xxiii. 4.**
[3] 2 Peter i. 17, 18.
[4] Dr. Bright, "The Law of Faith," p. 244.

and full of the most profound doctrinal and spiritual significance. Two main aspects may be taken as subjects for meditation—

I. The Transfiguration in its relation to the Death of Christ.

II. The Transfiguration as a Support to the Disciples' Faith.

Let us consider each of these.

The Transfiguration in its relation to the Death of Christ.[1]

What is death? Is it natural or the reverse? That is a question about which the Bible has no uncertainty. Death, according to the Scripture, is a consequence of sin, and therefore no part of the original Divine purpose for man. "In the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." The words would scarcely have been spoken if man would have died in any case. So the Psalmist says, "When Thou with rebukes dost chasten man for sin, Thou makest his beauty to consume away, like as it were a moth fretting a garment." To the Psalmist's mind death was a Divine rebuke, God chastening man for sin. The same thought finds expression in the Book of Wisdom as the long-standing Hebrew tradition, "God created man to be immortal, and made him to be an image of His own eternity; but by envy of the devil came death into the world." The same teaching is given by S. Paul: "By man came death, by Man came also the resurrection of the dead." Just as resurrection is introduced by Christ, so was death introduced by Adam. By man came death; man is its author. It is no part of the first Divine plan.

[1] S. Luke ix. 30, 31.

I.

1. Man, then, as created was endowed with natural perfection. But this did not raise him above the liability of death. To his natural perfection were added supernatural graces. And through these he would have been exempted from the experience of the grave. Close by him stood the Tree of Life, generally understood as a sacramental channel of immortality through which his life would have been continually renewed. Thus, had he lived without sin he had lived without death; he would have advanced from strength to strength, and when the term of his full development had arrived he would have passed without dissolution, without death, by some glorious transition, into the realms of the purely spiritual and eternal.

There is no difficulty here for faith, for we believe in the resurrection of the body. Now, He Who will restore could also, if He pleased, maintain.

2. But man's self-will involved him in the other alternative, a development through sin. He sinned, and the consequence was death in all its forms—spiritual, moral, physical. Spiritual death—that is, eternal separation from God; moral death—that is, disorder in his faculties and powerlessness to rise to the will of God; physical death, for man was henceforth separated from the Tree of Life, reduced from the spiritual to the purely natural. Death, which was at the first a possibility, he had made now to be a necessity. What man lost in the fall was not his natural perfection, but his supernatural grace, and that loss involved him in physical death. And the loss was co-extensive with the human race, for man could not bequeath what he did

not possess. He bequeathed his natural perfection, but not his supernatural grace. Thus death reigned over all mankind.

II.

From the first Adam we pass to the Second. When the Son of God entered human history He was conceived by the Holy Ghost, and born of the Virgin Mary; that is to say, He took our nature, but not our sinfulness. What He took He cleansed and sanctified. Human nature, therefore, begins anew in Him. This is why He is called the Second Adam. Once more a sinless development was possible, and this time not only possible, but fulfilled.

He led that Human Nature through each successive stage of progress, childhood, boyhood, youth, maturity; and in every stage He maintained it absolutely pure, holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners. He was like unto us in all things, sin alone excepted.

Now, if this train of thought be correct, then, in accordance with all that has gone before, it will follow that our Lord, being exempt from evil, was also exempt from the law of death. And that is precisely what the Scripture teaches. Our Lord says it Himself: "The prince of this world cometh, and hath nothing in Me"—nothing whereby he can bring Me under the law of sin, and so under that of death. Again, in terms still more explicit, "No man taketh My life from Me. I lay it down of Myself."

Accordingly, in this point of view, let us contemplate His Transfiguration. Our Lord ascends the mountain. "Who shall ascend into the hill of the Lord? or who

shall rise up in His holy place? Even he that hath clean hands and a pure heart, and that hath not lift up his mind unto vanity." In the strictest sense that is true of Christ alone. There He stands upon the mountain. He has reached the summit of His earthly development. He has fulfilled the Divine Will through all His life. His human nature becomes transfigured, spiritualized. Before Him lies the open heaven. Two visitants from the spiritual realm are at His side. Of the one it was written that no man knoweth his sepulchre; of the other that he went up to heaven in a chariot of fire. These two are there to welcome Him into the glory won by His perfect obedience. The reward of a life without sin is a deathless transition. This is the natural ending of the life of Christ—an ascension from the Mount of Transfiguration, without sorrow, without pain, without humiliation, without death.

But below lies the human race, and the whole world lies in darkness. And these are His brethren, and He will not separate Himself from the experience of their sufferings. He can do for them by His death what He cannot do by His example. Therefore He refuses His privilege. He talks of His decease which He must shortly accomplish at Jerusalem. Around is glory; in His thoughts is death. He turns away; nay, with strong effort He tears Himself away from the open heaven. The glory fades. He bids His disciples say nothing of the Vision until He be risen from the dead. And so He descends to the dull levels of human wretchedness, and powerlessness, and ignorance, and sin. The crowds surround Him, and the appalling contrast between the

brightness on the mountain and the confusion on earth extorts from Him that most touching cry, "Oh, faithless and perverse generation, how long shall I be with you? how long shall I suffer you? Bring him unto Me."

III.

1. Seen in this aspect, the Transfiguration is supremely critical in the experience of Jesus Christ. It is the crowning moment of His personal development. It manifests His relationship to death. Death in His case, and in His alone, is really voluntary. Doubtless the patriot, the martyr, the student, the overworked may accelerate the hour, and determine, to some extent, the manner of their death; but, after all, they must die in any case. Of Christ alone it is true that He accepted what He might have avoided altogether; that He voluntarily endured what He needed not pass through. To contemplate the purely voluntary character of His death should be to have our devotion deepened towards Him Whose so great love shrank not from this sacrifice.

2. Christ turning away from the open heavens to the misery of the plain is more than a demand upon our gratitude; it is also an example for our imitation. In every age there are men and women whom God calls to turn away from some open heaven to share that which otherwise they would not experience. If ever that call arrives, if ever the unconscious pleading of the multitude below invites to the sacrifice of the congenial, let us remember that this is the way in which the Master Himself has moved. And however such calls may be, this much at least is clear, that some resemblance must

exist between the Master and those who follow. Christianity is based on acceptance of the uncongenial for love of others. The mark of sacrifice rests on each true Christian life. The question for each of us is, Does it rest on mine?

The Transfiguration as a Support to the Disciples' Faith.[1]

It was with the disciples a time of deep depression. Our Lord had told them that He must shortly die. And His death, apart from larger faith than they yet possessed, could mean nothing else to them than hopeless ruin. Peter took our Lord to task for saying it, and brought upon himself a solemn rebuke, which, if it silenced, failed to convince, and left him in no less deep depression than before. Accordingly our Lord, to renew their full faith, permitted some of them to witness His Transfiguration.

For this purpose He selected three. It is natural to ask why He did not take them all. Nothing He ever did was arbitrary, and it would have been as easy to take the twelve as the three. May we not say that the selection was determined by their fitness? The eye sees what it brings with it the power to see. God reveals further truth to men in proportion to their preparedness.

At any rate, the selected persons point that way. For the first was S. Peter. His fervent love for Christ, his insight already shown, mark him out as a natural recipient of further revelations. The next was S. James, who declared his readiness to share the Baptism of his Lord, and was the first martyr of the Twelve. It was natural that he should be included. And the third was S. John, the

[1] 2 S. Peter i. 17, 18.

silent, the penetrating, the man whom nothing seems ever to escape, gifted with a marvellous insight into spiritual things. His selection was inevitable. And it is worthy of remark that the same three were chosen upon other occasions. He showed them His power in the chamber of death, His glory on the Mount of Transfiguration, His anguish in the Garden of Gethsemane. Is it not clear that He showed them the first and the second to enable them to bear the third?—His power and His glory, in order that they might be able to gaze upon His grief?

And with these three He withdrew to a mountain; suggestive of aloofness from the world, of that calm and reflection so difficult to obtain in modern life, and yet so essential to spiritual development. And there He prayed; and as He prayed a marvellous change passed over Him.

The Vision divides itself into three distinct phases.

1. The first is the personal change. His face shone as the sun; even His very vesture became dazzlingly glorious.

Habitual holy thoughts reflect themselves upon the countenance; a noble enthusiasm transfigures a man. We remember how when the Council looked on Stephen, they saw his face as it had been the face of an angel. No doubt, this reflection of the inner self is in this life imperfect. There is a natural beauty which does not reflect the inner self. But there is also a spiritual beauty which does. And we believe that in the future life the inner and the outer will perfectly correspond. Think of it! A perfect outward manifestation of what we are! This is what occurred in the Transfiguration of Christ—perfect correspondence between the inner and outer self. Remember that He was morally perfect. That moral

perfection revealed itself in His features. Remember that He was a Divine personality. That Divinity shone through the tenement of the flesh. Just as iron glows in the fire, so the human nature was illumined by spiritual glory. After all, the wonder is, not that His glory was occasionally revealed, but that it was habitually concealed. It was continually withheld from human unpreparedness; but now, for a brief space, manifested to the Three. The simple language of the Evangelist suggests, but only suggests, the indescribable glory and beauty of that unearthly sight, when human eyes were permitted to gaze adoringly on the unusual completed self-revelation of Jesus Christ.

2. The vision passed into its second phase. "There appeared unto Him Moses and Elias, talking with Him."

It has been asked, How did the disciples realize who these spiritual visitants were? Is not the answer, By spiritual affinity? A devout Jew would have a clear conception of the characteristics of them both. It opens out the whole question of recognition in a future state. May we not suppose that spiritual affinity will enable men to realize instinctively? Would it be difficult to recognize S. John or S. Paul? It is easy here to go beyond our depth, and we cannot know beyond what is revealed; but there seems no difficulty in supposing that Moses and Elias were instantly recognized.

Of these two we observe two things.

(1) First, *their presence.* Why, out of all the possible personages of the past, were these two seen? The answer is, because they represent the Law and the Prophets. Down on the earthly levels beneath our Lord had often

been called a preacher of the Law, come to destroy, and not to fulfil. The religious criticism of the age pointed out numerous discrepancies between Christ and the Mosaic Law. But here in the Holy Mount the great Lawgiver appears in person, he is seen in perfect harmony with Jesus Christ, recognizing His superiority, and according Him the fullest acknowledgment. The Old Testament is not contrary to the New. The Gospel is not opposed to the Law. In the Old Testament the New is concealed, in the New is the Old Testament revealed. Here, then, the judgment of the world as to what is Bible truth is reversed in the Holy Mount.

(2) Note, again, *their conversation.* They are talking of His decease which He must shortly accomplish at Jerusalem. His death—the very thing which seemed to S. Peter incredible, the very thing which he regarded as incompatible with faith in Jesus Christ is nevertheless here in the Holy Mount the subject of conversation, recognized as true. What a lesson for S. Peter! The true Faith does not in all its parts appeal to the natural man. "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." The natural man is incompetent to pronounce any opinion about them. The faith which was at the first incredible to S. Peter, to the Jews a stumbling-block, and to the Greeks foolishness, will always so appear to the merely natural, unspiritual man.

3. The vision passed on into its third phase—which was the bright cloud which overshadowed them. The cloud symbolized the presence of God. The cloud of incense

in the Holy Place concealed but suggested the presence of God. The pillar of the cloud in the wilderness was a reminder that God was there. Clouds and darkness are round about Him: darkness due to excess of light.

Thus the bright cloud overshadowing symbolized God's nearness. And therefore the disciples feared as they entered the cloud.

When we consciously draw near to God, or when God seems specially to draw near to us, then fear is natural. Fear is the emotion of the sinful creature in presence of the Sinless Creator. They feared as they entered the cloud. But with that fear came reverence, and with reverence capacity for still further truth. There came a Voice out of the cloud, "This is My beloved Son, in Whom I am well pleased; hear ye Him."

"And that Voice," says S. Peter—"that Voice which came to Him from Heaven we heard when we were with Him in the Holy Mount." It was the Eternal Father's acknowledgment of Jesus Christ. "He received from God the Father honour and glory." The Voice from Heaven points out our Lord to the reverence and worship of men. Hear Him. Again what a lesson for S. Peter! Him Whom you recently criticized, rebuked, and contradicted: hear Him. He speaks that which He knows; He testifies that which He has seen. Would you avoid error and know the Truth, then hear Him.

These are the three phases of the Vision—

The witness of our Lord's own character;

The witness of the Scriptures;

The witness of the Father Himself.

And these three witnesses to our Lord still remain.

They are, of course, far-reaching beyond the Transfiguration. They are in altered circumstances, yet substantial identity, offered to us as to them.

It is natural to ask what impression the Vision made upon the chosen three. One earthly exclamation from the midst of it remains to show; S. Peter said, "Lord, it is good for us to be here."

Here—that is, away from the world which lies in evil far below; here, apart from the doubts and hesitations and want of faith; here, where it is impossible to distrust, where heaven is close, and Thou art transfigured; here, where law and prophet are heard, and heavenly voices come through clouds of light, "Lord, it is good for us to be here."

It was natural, that exclamation—natural was the desire to make it permanent. Yet no one paid the least attention to S. Peter's words. And, in fact, S. Peter was mistaken. He knew not what he said.

1. For, after all, S. Peter was only a visitor there, only there by courtesy; he had no inherent right, he had no dwelling-place in the realm of the transfigured. To remain permanently among the transfigured it is necessary one's self to become transfigured. If Moses abides there, it is because for forty years he patiently endured the burden of an ungrateful people. If Elijah is found there, it is because he had been exceedingly zealous for the Lord God of Hosts. If our Lord Himself be there, may we not say reverently it is because He had maintained His human will in absolute union with the Divine? If S. Peter will dwell there, if he desires to win the right of fixing there his changeless dwelling, let him go down from the

Holy Mount to the confusions of the crowd beneath, and there work out his own salvation with fear and trembling. Earth is the workshop of human character; let him go down and labour there. Let the glory of the Sacred Face and vesture of Jesus Christ remind him of the type of character needed on that mount. It is holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord. The realm of the transfigured is not the beginning, but the goal, of all human endeavour. Peter, like all human beings, desired the crown without the effort, the reward without the strife. Some day that realm shall indeed be his, but not yet. Ere that can be achieved for him, men shall lead him whither he would not. But the roughness of the conflict is the process of his changing, and through earth's confusions shall he in God's time, far off but certainly, reach the realm of the transfigured.

2. Meanwhile we can easily see one reason why the Vision was given. It was given to strengthen their faith. Afterwards, between this and the Passion, they will see the look of sorrow and weariness and pain and trouble on that Sacred Face; one at least will see it crowned with thorns; all will see Him bowed with the burden of woe well-nigh too sharp for bearing under the olive shadows in Gethsemane. Often they will wish to see upon His Face that wondrous glory of the Holy Mount. Therefore that glory is shown them now beforehand to be the support of their faith. When the days of darkness come, let them revert in memory to the Holy Mount, and remember that the Transfigured Christ is the real Christ, after all, and that the sorrows even of Gethsemane shall pass, and He shall shine out once again and everlastingly in the bright realm of heavenly transfiguration and of peace.

One word of application. Moments of deep devotion, truly visions of the Transfigured Christ, times when words of Lawgiver or of Prophet come with a force unfelt before, experiences when heavenly voices sound through clouds of light,—these things cannot be summoned at will, they are not within our own control. He alone determines when, and how, and where, and to whom He will reveal His glory. On our side is the effort for preparedness, that we frustrate no vision by unworthiness; but the rest we must leave to Him.

Devout people often long to experience again the devouter moments of the past. They cannot see as once they saw, they cannot hear the heavenly sounds as once they heard them. The difference may be in part our own unworthiness. And yet there is another view. Surely, God gave that light in the past to be the strength and support of the present, and if faith burn dim, and in the darkness things are far less clear, let us hold firmly to the reality of that Vision in the past. At any rate that was true. Christ was really there revealed. You only pass through an experience similar to that of the three. First came the Holy Mount and after that Gethsemane, first the Vision of Glory and after the Vision of Woe. As the one strengthened them for the other, so it should be still. What is transient is the darkness, what is permanent is the light.

Christ may hide for a time the outward revelation of His inner glory, but at the last the glory will shine out abidingly revealed, when the soul shall say, when Peter and all heaven shall answer it, "Lord, it is good for us to be here."

August 7

The Name of Jesus

AUGUST 7 is the festival of the Holy Name, a subject which at once suggests devout meditation.

S. Chrysostom writing on the words of the angel to S. Joseph, which are the obvious Gospel words for this day, "Thou shalt call His Name Jesus,"[1] reflects—

1. On the duty imposed on S. Joseph. "For though the Offspring be not thine, yet shalt thou exhibit a father's care towards Him." Thus the angel commissions Joseph to give the Name to the Child that shall be born.

2. On the Name itself. It is brought from Heaven. It is sent by the Almighty through the angel to Joseph. It was not sent without most profound appropriateness. And thus the angel explains its meaning, "For He shall save His people from their sins."

The essential nature of Christian Redemption is declared in the interpretation given of the angel to the Holy Name. It is a spiritual deliverance. It is not that He shall save His people from political disturbances, nor from barbarians,

[1] S. Matt. i. 21.

nor from anything material, but from moral and spiritual servitude.

S. Augustine[1] tells us that the Holy Name never entirely lost its influence over him, even during his wildest wanderings. The ablest literature had not the truest charm if the Holy Name was absent from its pages. "Whosoever was without that Name, though never so learned, polished, or true, held not entire dominion over me."[2]

Few even of the saints have spoken of the Holy Name with such singular grace and beauty as S. Bernard has done. No translation can do full justice to the refinement and sweetness of his wonderful hymn, "*Jesu dulcis memoria.*" But Bernard's thoughts have been made our common possession and delight in the well-known rendering:—

"Jesu! the very thought is sweet;
In that dear Name all heart-joys meet;
But oh! than honey sweeter far
The glimpses of His Presence are.

"No word is sung more sweet than this,
No sound is heard more full of bliss,
No thought brings sweeter comfort nigh,
Than Jesus, Son of God most High.

"Jesu, the hope of souls forlorn,
How good to them for sin that mourn!
To them that seek Thee, oh how kind!
But what art Thou to them that find?

"No tongue of mortal can express,
No pen can write the blessedness,
He only who hath proved it knows
What bliss from love of Jesus flows.

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[1] See August 28.

[2] "Confessions," III. viii.

"O Jesu, King of wondrous might!
O Victor, glorious from the fight!
Sweetness that may not be express'd,
And altogether loveliest!

"Abide with us, O Lord, to-day,
Fulfil us with Thy grace, we pray;
And with Thine own true sweetness feed
Our souls from sin and darkness freed." [1]

[1] Hymns A. & M., 177.

August 10

S. Lawrence

S. LAWRENCE was Archdeacon of Rome in the days when Sixtus was Pope. Sixtus ruled his Church for little more than a year. He became Pope in 257 and was martyred in 258. The persecution raging in that year fell with special severity on the clergy, the policy of the State being to disorganize the Church by striking down its leaders. Among these Sixtus was naturally conspicuous. When Lawrence saw his master condemned to death, S. Ambrose tells us that he wept, not because Sixtus was taken, but because Lawrence was left. "Whither are you going, my father," said Lawrence, "without your son? Whither goes the priest without his deacon? Are you ever wont to offer sacrifice without a minister?"

Sixtus predicted that Lawrence would shortly follow him.

It was supposed by the persecutors that Lawrence had charge of the treasures of the Church. Accordingly he was ordered to produce them. Lawrence bade them to lend him waggons in which to bring the Church treasures. They did so; and Lawrence filled the waggons with the

very poorest of the poor. "These," said Lawrence, "are the Church's treasures." "It is most true," says S. Augustine; "the needs of the poor are the wealth of Christians. If we put our treasure there we do not lose it."[1]

To place this construction upon the incident required more philosophy than the magistrates possessed; and instead of enlightening their minds it roused their indignation.[2] Considering that Lawrence only intended to mock them, they resolved to force him by the most excruciating agonies to yield up the Church's wealth. They bound the martyr by chains upon an iron frame beneath which was kindled a fire, and Lawrence was slowly roasted to death. In the midst of this horrible torture Lawrence calmly bade the executioners turn him, as he was done on one side. And finally bade them make their meal, as he was ready to be eaten.[3]

The martyrdom of S. Lawrence was a favourite theme with the greatest Fathers. S. Ambrose, S. Augustine, S. Leo, S. Peter Chrysologus, in Milan, in Africa, in Rome and in Ravenna recorded their veneration. The feast of S. Lawrence was kept within a century of his death. The particulars of his martyrdom stand on a firm historic basis. They seem to represent a man of dauntless fortitude, incapable either of fearing men or resisting a sarcasm.

The spirit of his utterances in martyrdom will not probably appeal to the Christian judgment as do the utterances

[1] S. Augustine, Sermon 302.
[2] Cf. S. Peter Chrysologus, "Verum dixit sed amarum."
[3] S. Augustine, Sermon 302.

of devout hope, resignation and forgiveness, more often found on martyrs' lips. But the splendour of an absolute fearlessness must silence criticism and elicit reverence, especially in an age in which we can only tremble to think what consequences such fiery trials might have if reproduced in modern Christendom.

August 28

S. Augustine

THE town of Tagaste in Numidia has been redeemed from oblivion solely as the birthplace of the greatest uninspired teacher of Christendom. Augustine was born in November, 354. His father Patricius was a pagan, his mother Monica a Christian. The two religions contended for him. But his father's paganism seems to have been more an inherited tradition than a personal conviction. And his mother's piety had a stronger influence over him than his father's unbelief. The story of his early years is gathered from the pages of his "Confessions," which for depth, fervid faith, self-knowledge, and sincerity stand supreme among autobiographies. Augustine was not naturally studious, and the indolence of boyhood left various deficiencies, afterwards lamented, but never entirely removed.

Monica taught her child the Christian Faith, and gave the holy Name of Jesus so supreme a place in his heart that it never lost all influence, even in his darkest days.

It was one of the child's early prayers that he might not be whipped at school, and that appeal of the young life

to a greater than human power was undoubtedly due to Monica's teaching.

Augustine, while still a child, fell dangerously ill, and his main anxiety was that he might be baptized. His infancy had been consecrated by the sign of the Cross, but not regenerated in the Baptismal waters. This strange neglect was due to a one-sided sense of the greater gravity of post-baptismal sin. They seemed to forget the protective influence of sacramental grace. Augustine recovered, and remained unbaptized, a fact which in after years he deeply deplored.

As Augustine grew older his gifts rapidly displayed themselves. The old idleness disappeared. The bent of his mind towards literature was clearly seen. He hated mathematics with a cordial detestation. "One and one are two, two and two are four, was an odious sing-song to me."[1] But literature charmed and fascinated and mastered him. His powerful imagination seized and realized the scenes of Virgil's poem with vividness, and he shed tears over the death of Dido. It was part of the school training for the scholars to throw the legends of the poets into their own language, and to recite them in the form of a declamation, accompanied, as in acting, with gestures suited to the character assumed. Here Augustine's power declared itself. His great gift of speech, his historic insight, the power of his imagination to clothe it with reality, gave promise of a brilliant future. But his triumph was his danger, for it made him vain.

The sins of his boyhood—stealing fruit and deceitfulness—are recorded in the "Confessions," and condemned thirty

[1] Hutchings' translation of the "Confessions," I. xiii.

years later with a severity unexpected from ordinary men, but perfectly intelligible in one who beneath the outward actions saw deeply into the inner sinfulness of human nature. To Augustine the sins of childhood are but the early manifestations of the deep-rooted inner corruption. The objects of desire may change from childhood to maturity, but the sinful spirit remains.

Patricius was in his way very proud of his son, and ambitious of his success. His son in after years recorded with gratitude that his father, notwithstanding narrow means, had done far more for his intellectual training than many wealthy citizens did for their sons. The family's slender resources were taxed to the utmost to give Augustine the highest education at Carthage. Carthage was the African University City, and as a centre of intellectual light stood in those days second only to Rome itself. Here the young man became a student at the age of seventeen.

Patricius lived only a few months after his son was entered at Carthage. The few months were eventful, for during that time he abandoned his paganism, and accepted Monica's religion.

The death of Patricius nearly blighted the prospects of his son's career. The young student was unable to provide for himself, and his career seemed ended. Providentially, in this hour of necessity Romanian, a wealthy citizen of Tagaste, befriended him, and enabled him to pursue his studies.

Augustine distinguished himself through his student career. He carried off various prizes, and was crowned at a public festival by the pro-consul Vindician. Gifted

with an excellent memory, he read everything that came in his way. His acuteness and penetration enabled him to master by himself, and with singular rapidity, treatises in metaphysics and philosophy, for which he displayed a natural taste, while his fellow-students painfully and laboriously pursued a slower rate of progress. He turned his studies to good account. And he looked down with no little pride from the eminence which his natural gifts secured him upon his intellectual inferiors.[1]

But if his student life was intellectually a success, it was morally a failure. He formed an unhappy connection with a woman whom he never married, but by whom he became a father at the age of eighteen.

And this was the time when, torn between higher and lower ideals, Augustine expressed in prayer the melancholy utterance of a divided heart, "Give me purity, but not now."

Augustine's student days were marked by *moral failure*, and also by *loss of faith*.

He fell a victim to Dualism. Dualism is one of the ancient attempts of human reason to explain the mystery of evil. It assumes the existence of two eternal and antagonistic principles, the one evil, the other good. It declares human nature to be a confused intermingling of elements derived from both—the body being evil and the soul good. A form of this theory derived from the East, and labelled with the name of Manichæism, was popular in Augustine's days, and to the brilliant young student it possessed an extraordinary fascination. It appealed forcibly to his intellectual pride, for it claimed

[1] "Confessions," IV. xvi.

to rest solely on the reason, and, unlike the Catholic religion, to make no demands whatever upon its hearer's faith. This claim was not in fact substantiated, but it powerfully impressed the student in the lecture-rooms at Carthage. Their incessant reiteration of their watchword, "The Truth, the Truth," which, as he afterwards came to know, "was not in them," had for several years an imposing effect. From his nineteenth to his twenty-eighth year Augustine remained a nominal adherent to this theory.

Augustine's perversion to the Manichæan heresy was a subject of intense grief to Monica. Her son seemed doubly lost to her. He had attached himself to some woman whom he never married. He had also thrown aside the very hopes of his recovery when he parted with the Faith. Monica's repugnance was so great that she could hardly bring herself to live in the same house with him.[1] Love, however, prevailed, and she overcame her reluctance and remained. Monica, in that decision, certainly chose the harder lot; and the mute appeal of her patient love could not have been altogether lost upon her son.

In these long days of her loneliness and distress, Monica found more than ever the consolations of Faith. Day and night she prayed, and hoped against hope in Augustine's behalf. Her very dreams were filled with thoughts of him. What singles out Monica above all things is the reality of her religion. To her the Catholic Faith was everything. She cared incomparably more for her son's faith than for his worldly prospects. She was

[1] "Confessions," III. xi.

a woman of deep religious convictions. The facts and truths of Christianity were to her so clear, so certain, the results of their neglect so obvious and so terrible, that no other considerations could for a moment satisfy her while her son rejected these. She loved her son with a devotion few have surpassed; but she loved him in Jesus Christ. Once in a dream she saw her son restored to Faith. She told Augustine her hope. He endeavoured to reverse the moral of her dream, and retorted that it plainly proved that she would one day think as he did. "Not so," she replied, with quick dexterity. "It was not said to me where *he* is, there also are *you*; but where *you* are, there also is *he*." [1]

Monica derived much comfort from a bishop of the Church to whom she confided the sorrow of her life. She entreated him to interfere in her son's desperate condition; but he, with a greater knowledge of human nature, declined. To one in Augustine's state of mind argument would be worse than futile; it would be positively dangerous. At such a crisis, the mere semblance of a logical victory would easily confirm him more fixedly in error, and would render the ultimate triumph of the Truth more problematical and more difficult than before. The bishop was speaking from personal experience. As a boy he was himself a victim to the same delusion. Let him alone, he advised; time and study will themselves emancipate him. It was not possible for Augustine to wander for life in the mazes of such a system. Monica was anything but convinced. She renewed her request amid passionate tears. At last, not without some impatience, the bishop

[1] 'Confessions,' III. xi.

replied, "Live so, for it cannot be that the son of those tears should perish."[1]

The poor woman treasured those words as if an angel uttered them. And so she lived on through many weary years of constant prayer, to see one day her hope abundantly realized.

But not yet. Augustine was to pass through many a bitter experience before he won his way back to Faith. Meanwhile, with all the enthusiasm of a convert, he did his utmost to extend among others his new convictions. His powerful personality gave him that marked ascendency over the minds of other men, which is one of the distinguishing features of his career. He drew others into error after him. Romanian, his patron, followed him; so did Alypius, his friend; so did another, of whom we have a pathetic tale.

They had grown up together; they went to school together; they played together. And the long-standing friendship had increased in depth and strength now that they were men.[2] "I had turned him aside from the true Faith, which as a youth he had but imperfectly grasped, and now he erred with me, and I could not endure to be parted from him. But lo, Thou didst follow close upon Thy fugitives, O God of vengeance and fountain of mercies, Thou didst convert us by wonderful ways." Augustine's companion fell dangerously ill with fever, and lay unconscious. During the period of insensibility Holy Baptism, hitherto postponed according to the evil custom widely prevalent in that age, was conferred upon him as he lay apparently dying.

[1] "Confessions," IV. iv. [2] Ibid.

Augustine watched the proceedings with scornful indifference. When the invalid regained consciousness, Augustine described to him, in terms of ridicule, what had been done, fully expecting his friend to share his own feelings. What was his amazement to find himself answered in words of unwonted severity, and told never again to repeat those jesting expressions about sacred things, under pain of forfeiting his friendship for ever! Augustine was disconcerted and silenced; but he secretly determined to wait until the invalid had sufficiently recovered to have all such Christian theories driven out of his head. That time, however, did not come. The sick man had a relapse and died.

The first time death comes so close in a young man's life, is a time marked in the character and in the memory with well-nigh indelible scars. To one in the delightful possession of fresh, vigorous, and apparently boundless energies, death is a thought quickly relegated to the far-off limits of extreme old age. But here it was, in all its terrors. It had come, descending like a thunderclap out of serene skies, unexpected, impossible. The ghastliness, the horror, the loneliness, the insecurity, were overwhelming. Augustine abandoned himself to a perfect agony of grief. The light of his life had gone from him. He could no longer endure the old familiar places—the home, the streets, the haunts which friendship endeared by countless memories. To be constantly expecting to meet the dead as formerly when living,[1] to be often waiting for the touch of a vanished hand, and the sound of a voice which was still, and then to awaken to the rude reality, was terrible. His

[1] "Confessions," IV. iv.

whole being rebelled against death, with a vain and profitless passion. "I was miserable," he exclaims; "and miserable is every soul which is fettered by the love of perishable things. He is torn to pieces when he loses them; and then he perceives how miserable he was in reality whilst he possessed them. And so was I then. I wept most bitterly, and in that bitterness found rest."[1] But nothing really soothed him. Nothing could please or divert his attention from death. He and the dead had been as one soul in two bodies. And to be alone was intolerable. Neither nature, nor melody, nor relaxation, nor study could take away his thoughts from the one theme, bereavement. He tried everything in turn, and could rest in none.[2]

"Whither could my heart flee from my heart?
Whither could I escape from myself?"

The only relief was to go right away into new scenes. For he was not always expecting to meet the dead at every turn in the streets if dwelling in surroundings where he had not been accustomed to see him.

Reflecting upon all this experience in the light of recovered faith, Augustine afterwards saw wherein true friendship really consists.

"Blessed is he who loves Thee,
And his friend in Thee,
And his enemy because of Thee.
For he alone loses no one dear to him,
To whom all are dear in Him Who never can be lost.
None loses Thee, but he who forsakes Thee,
And he who forsakes Thee
Whither can he go?
Or whither can he fly?
Unless it be from Thy mercy to Thine anger!

[1] "Confessions," IV. vi. [2] Ibid., IV. vii.

"Why then be perverted and follow the flesh?
Let the flesh rather be converted and follow Thee. . . .

"There is no rest where ye seek it.
Seek what ye seek,
But it is not where ye seek it.
Ye seek a happy life in the region of death:
It is not there."[1]

The weak points in Manichæan philosophy had by no means escaped detection in the passage of the years. Disillusioned and saddened, Augustine's soul was filled with uneasy misgivings.

Various parts of the theory refused to be reconciled with each other. Neither could Dualism explain the fact of man's free will. The student did not cherish his perplexities in secret. But his instructors were unable to throw much light upon them. All they did was to refer him to the acutest thinker of the sect, who was not yet among them, but was shortly expected to visit Carthage. Faustus would speedily solve Augustine's difficulties. Indeed, he could throw light on problems more profound than these. Augustine was content to wait. At last Faustus came. Faustus was a ready and brilliant speaker, gifted with many charms of voice and manner, who by laborious study and incessant practice had acquired great facility in rhetorical display. Augustine was fascinated. Evidently this was the very man to solve doubts and answer riddles. Augustine sought him out, and confessed his difficulties. Faustus, however, was by no means the person to cope with the profoundest of problems. His abilities were brilliant but superficial. He could

[1] "Confessions," IV. xii.

throw no light upon his questioner's suggestions. But, at least, he had the honesty to say so. He laid no claim to a knowledge which he did not possess; and with a sincerity which did him honour, and which won Augustine's heart, he frankly admitted that he could offer no reply. From that time the two men became friends, and studied together.

But Augustine's hold on Dualism grew less and less. He became weary of the beautiful language and flowing periods and eloquent utterances which formerly captivated him, for the substance of the philosophy itself appeared to him less and less worthy of credit. The mind was not necessarily wise because the speech was graceful. The assertions were not more true because more beautifully expressed.[1] What formerly appeared as solid ground was now seen to be yielding and giving way. Abysses of unfathomable doubt and difficulty opened out before him. He did not know what the end might be, and he scarcely dared to face it. Faustus, unwittingly, had opened Augustine's eyes. He had no longer any faith in the theory of the Manichæans. The bitterness of bereavement, the disappointed intellectual hopes, the aspirations of ambition, the unruliness of the Carthaginian pupils, all combined to turn Augustine's thoughts elsewhere.

Naturally he selected Rome as his destination. Monica determined to face the perils of the sea and accompany him. Augustine was equally determined, but in secret, that she should not go. By a heartless act of deception he abandoned her in the memorial church of S. Cyprian, near the sea, and sailed away at night, and was gone.

[1] "Confessions," V. vi.

At Rome he fell dangerously ill in the house of a Manichæan, for he had not yet openly broken with the sect which he inwardly disowned.[1] Great indeed was the contrast between the boy Augustine on his sick-bed, earnestly begging his mother to let him receive the grace of Holy Baptism, his mind full of holy things, and Augustine the grown man, desperately ill, sick in body and sick in mind, with faith lost and heart enslaved to a selfish and a hardening passion, indifferent to Divine remedies. It is Augustine himself who has drawn this contrast. What if he had died in that desperate condition? In after years he recalled it with a shudder. God, however, permitted his recovery. And it is very touching to observe that Augustine attributes his recovery simply to his mother's prayers—that mother whom he had deceived and abandoned.

"Thou wouldest not suffer me to die a second death, being in such a state; for had I died my mother's heart would have been broken, and her wound incurable. No words can express her love for me; and how much more grievous were the throes with which she laboured for the birth of my spirit than her travail at the birth of my flesh!"[2]

Meanwhile, in her loneliness in Africa, abandoned by the son of her tears, Monica threw herself with renewed and ceaseless entreaties at the feet of Christ, "never omitting for a day the oblation at Thine altar. Twice a day, morning and evening, coming to Thy church, that she might hear Thy words, and that Thou mightest hear her prayers."[3]

[1] "Confessions," V. ix. [2] Ibid., V. iv. [3] Ibid., V. ix.

At Rome his state of mind was one of despondency and perplexity. Partly disentangled from Manichæan theories, which continued to assert a partial ascendency, he still regarded evil as a substance somehow mysteriously connected with nature and with man. From this two consequences flowed, the one that his sins were not his own, the other that an Incarnation seemed impossible. His sins were not his own, for he attributed them to his nature, not his will. "I rejoiced to think that my pride was not my fault, and when I had done wrong I did not confess that I had done it, . . . but delighted to excuse myself and accuse I know not what—something which was with me, yet was not I myself."[1] Moreover, the idea of an Incarnation of the Godhead, a close union between the spiritual and the material natures, presented to his mind insuperable difficulties. He could not understand how the Divine Nature could "mingle with flesh, and yet remain undefiled."[2]

"I feared, therefore," he says, "to believe Him born in the flesh, lest I should be obliged to regard Him as defiled by the flesh. Thy spiritual ones will smile if they read these confessions of mine. Yet, however, such was I then."

This state of mind did not long continue. He assumed a yet more critical attitude towards the Manichæan theories, which more and more lost their cogency and attractiveness. Here a new peril found him. He was on the verge of total unbelief. Shaken in his hold upon principles so long accredited, he began to doubt whether, for the human intellect, truth was attainable. Nor, indeed, at the time did he possess any adequate conception of the nature of

[1] "Confessions," V. x. 18. [2] Ibid., V. x.

the Catholic Religion. When his mind reverted to the Catholic Faith, he was driven back because he had no firm idea of what the Catholic Faith actually was.

All throughout this inward conflict Augustine maintained himself as a teacher of rhetoric. Private pupils were gathered round him, no doubt through Manichæan influence. The student in Rome was a sober individual compared with the undisciplined mob in the African city. But if superior in manners, he was not more satisfactory in morals. The Roman student had no scruple in withdrawing from the class without payment of the teacher's fee. Augustine was in difficulties. Rome was not more ideal than Carthage. Discouraged and disgusted, he looked wistfully for some independent sphere where he might exercise his gift and pursue his studies unimpeded by material and sordid anxieties. Symmachus, prefect of the city of Rome, heard Augustine make a public speech, and was strongly impressed; and when the citizens of Milan appealed to the prefect to send them a professor of rhetoric, Augustine was selected.[1] This removal to Milan was a step involving most important consequences, and, indeed, vitally affecting the whole of his subsequent career.

The young African entered Milan when Ambrose had been some ten years bishop of the city. Augustine frequently found his way to the cathedral at Milan, chiefly at first in the capacity of critic, to see whether Ambrose deserved his reputation. And he readily admitted that, whatever might be said for the teachers of heresy in point of genius and of style, Ambrose incomparably surpassed

[1] A D. 385

them in the substance of his teaching. Thus he was drawn to listen week after week, while upon every Sunday the archbishop preached. Still he kept his judgment in deliberate suspense. Deceived by a false physician, he dare scarcely entrust himself to the true. He was in this condition when Monica found him. The poor woman had followed him across the seas, and at last discovered him at Milan.

"I told her," writes her son, "that I was no longer a Manichæan, although not yet a Catholic." This was the first answer to that devoted mother's prayers. She received it without the least surprise or expression of excessive gladness. She said with perfect calmness that she trusted in Christ to see him a faithful Catholic before she died.[1]

"So much she said to me; but to Thee, Fountain of mercies, she poured forth prayers and tears more copiously, that Thou wouldest hasten Thy assistance, and enlighten my darkness. And she ran more eagerly to Thy church, and hung upon the lips of Ambrose, for the fountain of water which springs up unto eternal life; for she loved that man as an angel of God, because she knew that it was through his instrumentality that I had been in the meanwhile brought to this present state of doubt, through which she confidently anticipated that I should pass from sickness to health, after the disease had reached a severer stage, which physicians call 'the crisis.'"[2]

Meanwhile Monica, with a sweet dexterity, did her best to bring her son into Ambrose's way. She made him carry her own inquiries to the archbishop, and visit him as

[1] "Confessions," VI. [2] Ibid., VI. i.

if in her behalf. And, indeed, in her behalf it was, for her son's needs were dearer to her than her own.

It was customary in the African Church to observe Saturday as a fast, but in Italy this practice was not in vogue; and Monica was in doubt whether she ought to follow the Italian use or continue the custom in which she had been trained from early days. She requested Augustine to consult the archbishop. To Augustine's mind the matter was not of the slightest concern—he didn't care two pins; but for the sake of her womanly scruples he consented to go and ask. The archbishop's answer is noteworthy, both from its independent spirit and its forbearance. "When I am here," he said, "I do not fast on Saturday; but when I am at Rome I do. Whatever Church you may come to, the best way is to conform to its customs, if you would avoid either giving or receiving offence."[1]

So Monica obtained for her son the best friendship in her power. But although Augustine was thus brought into contact with Ambrose, he never unburdened himself, nor sought to turn the conversation towards those matters with which his conscience was troubled, and of which his heart was full. Yet Ambrose was a man whom he grew increasingly to respect, and respect deepened into reverence, and reverence into love.[2] The priest received him in the most fatherly way, and won his heart. Still the African held aloof. He was still possessed with a deeply rooted mistrust of the Catholic Religion. He has left us a life-like picture of Ambrose in his daily life. The archbishop was one of the most accessible of men. People entered

[1] Letter 36, to Casulan. [2] "Confessions," V. xiii.

his study unannounced in the most unconventional fashion. Thither Augustine resorted, as he tells us. But having entered the room, he faltered. Apparently his courage failed him. There sat Ambrose, studying the sacred books, and at times so wholly wrapped up in meditation as to be as if unconscious of another's presence. Augustine waited and waited. Time went on, but the archbishop gave no sign of recognition; and at last the intruder departed as silently as he came, his object unfulfilled, his wants unsatisfied.

Ambrose's outward obliviousness to Augustine's spiritual needs has often exercised the minds of his biographers. But in all probability he acted for the best. He could not well be entirely ignorant of the state of the young man's soul, and it was impossible for him not to sympathize most profoundly. No stress of work and cares of an episcopate and necessities of engrossing study would have kept Ambrose from guiding Augustine if the time for such guidance had come. But if Ambrose declined all controversy, unquestionably he was actuated by a conviction of its inexpediency, its futility, its risk.[1] There are states of the soul in which argument is positively dangerous. Proud of his abilities, confident in his mental strength, was Augustine the brilliant lecturer to be won by mere reasonings? His was, after all, a moral more than a mental disease. The less Ambrose disputed with Augustine the more Augustine disputed with himself. What was actually going on in his own mind is best heard in his own words.

"And I wondered exceedingly, as I looked back and

[1] See Bougaud, "Monique," p. 284.

reflected how long a time it was since my nineteenth year, when I first began to be inflamed with longing after wisdom, and fully meant, when that was found, to abandon the lying follies of vain desires. And lo, now I was in my thirtieth year, and still just where I was. . . . A great hope has sprung up. The Catholic Faith does not teach what we supposed and vainly accused it of. . . ."[1]

And certainly, in producing this better knowledge of the Faith, the teaching of Ambrose was, under God, instrumental.

> "To him I was unknowingly led by Thee,
> That by him I might be knowingly led to Thee."[2]

Monica's son was drawing nearer to the Truth. But Christianity demanded faith. Catholic religion did not confine itself merely to statements which unaided reason could demonstrate. The province of Christianity exceeded that of mere logic. Here Augustine had stumbled. Years before, in early student days, the requirements of faith had repelled him, while the Manichæan boast of a religion founded on pure reason had attracted him. Experience of human life had, however, in the course of time brought into prominence other factors which the student had previously failed to take into account. Faith of some sort lies at the foundation of all human intercourse. Without faith social existence would become impossible. Assent to matters of fact on the evidence of mankind is what we perpetually exhibit, and must exhibit every day we live. And what is that but faith? The most sceptical about religious faith is compelled to exercise historic faith—faith in events recorded in the story of nations; faith

[1] "Confessions," VI. xi. [2] Ibid., V. xiii.

in the existence of cities they have never seen, in the reality of personages whose acts and words they cannot logically verify; faith in the statements of scientific explorers, medical men; faith which alone renders the business of life possible; faith that they are the children of certain parents.[1] All these experiences in actual life convinced Augustine that faith, if an indispensable condition of secular knowledge, must necessarily be indispensable in the higher and more difficult province of spiritual realities.

Accordingly, Augustine came to regard faith in another light. It was not an abdication of reason, as he once supposed, but an indispensable condition of acquiring spiritual truth. Never at any time did Monica's son lose all faith in God's existence, but this knowledge was shadowy in the extreme. A vague, ill-defined belief in a sort of Providence, a general idea that the Unseen was indeed the true reality, a conviction sometimes comparatively firm, sometimes perilously insecure—this, in the secret depth, was all he had. There had been hours when even this scanty shred of truth seemed wondrously near to perishing.

Out of his very insecurity came good. Experience, through apparently interminable mazes of wandering, forced him to acknowledge that one of humanity's profoundest wants is the need of some *authority*—an authority definite, clear, certain, abiding, coming to the rescue where the mind is, as he expresses it, "too weak to find out truth by reasoning."[2] Such authority was, according to Catholic conviction, partly to be found in Holy Scripture. "I now began to believe that Thou wouldest in no way have given such high authority to the Scripture throughout

[1] "Confessions," VI. v. [2] Ibid.

all lands, if Thou hadst not wished that through it we should believe in Thee, and through it seek Thee." [1] "The Holy Scripture," he adds, "which the authority of the Catholic Church commended to us." [2]

Evidently the Catholic mind acknowledged a twofold authority, that of the Church and that of the Scriptures.

Enlightened to some extent by the Neoplatonic writers, Augustine turned to the Scriptures which ten years before he despised. "Its authority appeared to me all the more venerable and worthy of religious acceptance, because while it was easily read by all, yet it reserved in a deeper meaning its secret greatness; offering itself to all in simplest language and lowliest style, yet demanding the closest study from those who have the power of applying themselves." Ambrose's influence had made itself felt.[3]

How different was Augustine's verdict ten years ago! It was not the Scriptures, but their reader who had changed. And here was the commencement of that reverent love for the Bible, which deepened continually with every year of Augustine's life. Here, also, he found the completion of much which his Platonic instructors had taught him. Already he had heard of the Word of God eternal with God. Now he heard the mystery of the Incarnation.[4]

But the real difficulty with Augustine was moral. He was filled with self-contempt, yet too feeble to break with what he deplored.

"So I understood," he exclaims, "by my own experience, what I had read, how the flesh lusteth against the Spirit,

[1] "Confessions," VI. v. [2] Ibid., VII. vii.
[3] Hutchings' trans., "Confessions," VII. v.
[4] "Confessions," VII. xix.–xxi.

and the Spirit against the flesh."[1] Convinced of duty, yet morally powerless, hearing yet giving no practical response to the call, "Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light,"[2] he describes himself as like one overwhelmed with drowsiness akin to death, unable to make effective resistance, aware of the peril, yet sinking deeper, giving to those friendly voices which longed to rouse him no answer except the language of delay—a little longer, give me a little longer time, and then I will arise; I will break with the past, but not just yet.[3] He acknowledged that it was noble to be self-restrained, yet he surrendered to his passions. Like the men of old, who worshipped God and served their own idols, Augustine attended the cathedral at Milan, yet continued to worship his sin. Miserably divided, torn asunder between conflicting calls within, he, if any man, realized in his own person the apostolic sentence, "I delight in the law of God after the inward man; but I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members;"[4] and perhaps no man ever re-echoed with more fervent reality that cry *de profundis*, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?"[5] Who indeed but Thy grace, through Jesus Christ?

Nearer and nearer came the day of deliverance. But further experience even yet was needed before freedom was won. On Augustine's table lay the writings of S. Paul; deeply studied, his mind and heart responded to their

[1] Gal. v. 17. [2] Eph. v. 14. [3] "Confessions," VIII. v.
[4] Rom. vii. 22, 23. [5] Rom. vii. 24.

appeal. Left alone with his intimate friend Alypius, Augustine poured forth the agony of his soul, indignant, ashamed, swept away into a hurried, impassioned torrent of self-reproach. "What is it that holds us back? The unlearned arise, and take heaven by force. And we with all our learning, heartless that we are, see where we wallow in flesh and blood! Are we ashamed to follow the lead of humbler men? Are we not ashamed to linger where we are?"[1] One thing alone on Augustine's part was needed—"to will firmly and undividedly."[2] And precisely there he had failed. It is a signal instance of the proverbial unproductiveness of mere good intentions.

The rest cannot possibly be told in any other words than Augustine's own. "Thus was I sick at heart and tormented. . . . And Thou, O Lord, wast inwardly urging me, with merciful severity redoubling the lashes of fear and shame, lest I should again give over, and my bonds regain their strength, and bind me more than ever. For I said within myself, 'Come, let it be done now, let it be done now.' And as I said it I was on the point of coming to the resolve. I all but did it, yet I did not do it. Yet I did not slide back to my old state, but kept my ground hard by, and took breath. And I made another effort, and almost succeeded, and was within a very little of touching and laying hold of it; and yet I did not reach it, and did not grasp it, hesitating to die unto death, and live unto Life. And the evil which I had been long accustomed to had more hold over me than the better life not yet experienced. And the very moment wherein I was to become different, the nearer it approached me, the more horror did it strike into

[1] "Confessions," VIII. [2] Ibid., VIII. viii.

me. But it did not strike me back, nor turn me aside, but held me in suspense.

"Toys of toys, and vanities of vanities, my old loves held me back, and made my fleshly garments quiver, whispering softly, 'Dost thou leave us? And from that moment shall we never be with thee any more? And from this moment will not this and that be allowed thee for ever?' And what did they suggest in that which I call 'this or that'? What did they suggest, my God? Let Thy mercy turn it away from the soul of Thy servant What defilements did they suggest? What shameful things! And I heard them now much less than half, and not as openly opposing me before my face, but as it were muttering behind my back, and furtively twitching me as I departed, to make me look back on them. Yet they did retard me, hesitating to snatch myself away and break from them and go whither I was called; the violence of habit kept saying to me, 'Do you think you could do without them?'

"But now the voice came to me very faintly. For in that direction whither I had set my face, and whither I trembled to go, there appeared to me the chaste dignity of Continence, calm and modestly cheerful, honestly alluring me to come and not doubt, and stretching out holy hands, full of multitudes of good examples. Boys and girls were there, youth and every age were there, widows and virgins were there. . . . And Chastity smiled upon me as much as to say, 'Why cannot you do what these youths and maidens have done? or can these and those do it in themselves and not in the Lord their God?'" [1]

[1] "Confessions," VIII. xi.

Augustine stole away even from Alypius. He could not bear that human eyes should witness his agony of repentance. Quite alone, in the most shadowy recesses of the garden, under a fig tree he threw himself to the ground, and broke down in floods of bitter, uncontrollable tears. "When thou wast under the fig tree I saw thee."[1] Our Lord's words to Nathanael may have their explanation here. The supreme crisis of the spiritual conflict had come.

"How long?" he cried, "how long? To-morrow and to-morrow? Why not to-day? Why not this very hour put an end to my defilements?"[2]

Not far away, from a neighbouring house, Augustine heard some child-voice saying repeatedly, "Take and read, take and read." He did not know, he could not tell why a voice should be uttering those words. But it was suitable that an innocent child should be made the messenger of pure intention to a broken-hearted man. He remembered how it was written in the life of S. Anthony that a passage of the Gospel read in church had changed his whole career. He remembered how S. Anthony had listened to the words, "Sell all that thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in Heaven, and come take up the Cross, and follow Me,"—had listened and taken Christ literally, and obeyed. And with that resolution Augustine arose, and returned to his friend. By his side lay the Epistles of S. Paul. Augustine, with trembling hand, took up the sacred volume, opened, and, of all words in Scripture, those upon which his eyes first rested were these: "Not in rioting and drunkenness, not in chambering

[1] S. John i. 48. [2] "Confessions," VIII. xii.

and wantonness, not in strife and envying. But put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts thereof." [1]

Augustine read no more. It was enough. He pointed his friend Alypius to those words, which for him burnt in characters of fire, and conveyed the message and the judgment of Him to Whom all hearts are open. It was done. He closed the volume in silence, and sat down. The fetters of immoral habit at last were broken. The full flood of the returning light of grace streamed down into the remotest corners of that noble but darkened heart.

The strain of the long conflict told alike upon mind and body. Augustine's whole nature demanded quietude. He resigned his lectureship, and withdrew to a country house placed at his disposal outside Milan, and there lived several months, with relatives, pupils, and friends, a life of study, meditation, and prayer. S. Ambrose was appealed to for advice on the course of their studies, and recommended Isaiah, for which, however, the convert found it better to substitute the Psalms. Here the deepest emotions of his soul, the highest heights of praise, the lowest depths of humiliation and penitence, found their most perfect expression. Rising at dawn, Augustine spent the chief part of the day in directing the studies of his pupils, and in discussions on the profound mysteries of life. And then in silent meditation, prolonged far on into the night, he prepared himself for admission into the Catholic Church.

Life in the Roman villa near Milan, although to outward

[1] Rom. xiii. 13, 14.

appearance calm, secluded, and peaceful, was intellectually a very busy one. Nearly the whole day was taken up in carefully training the young men committed to his charge; he read with them in general literature, he discussed with them the great problems of life, he gave them the great principles of conduct, above all things he laboured to lead them in the Christian direction. Thus, during the day Augustine had very little time to himself. Certainly the scanty intervals of leisure accorded him were insufficient for that rigorous self-inquiry and investigation after which his deeply religious nature craved. But at night, after the household had retired to rest, he gave himself up to those meditations which, all along, he had been eager to pursue. Here, again, Augustine has taken the world into his confidence, and placed on record what these meditations were in a volume which he styled "Soliloquies." In the soliloquies Augustine appears as the seeker after God. The whole drift of his meditations is summed up in one sentence: "Deus semper idem, noverim me, noverim Te." [1]

The knowledge most essential for man is twofold, the knowledge of God and the knowledge of his own soul. But to achieve this the faculties of the mind must be centred on this alone. Many obstacles intervene. There are countless perverting influences. The soul must be swept from defilement, the sight purified from all which can obscure it, before man is capable of the Vision of God.

Among the various influences which can assault and hurt the soul, a few of the most prominent are these:

[1] "Soliloquies," bk. ii. 619.

avarice, ambition, passion, gluttony. Augustine cross-questions himself severely about all these. He is determined to realize his exact condition, so far as it lies within his power. Upon the threshold of an entirely new life—he has done altogether with the past, it is broken up and abandoned—he gathers his strength for the trials of the Christian life.

What of avarice?[1] The love of money has departed from him. Fourteen years ago its influence over him was great. Now he can say, "Give me neither wealth nor poverty, give me the food convenient for me." Having food and raiment, he is sure that he can be therewith content.

What of ambition?[2] He confesses that he is just beginning to escape from this tyranny, the love of human praise.

What of passion?[3] He has determined to live a solitary life. He will not marry. "I do not ask you," persists the voice of Conscience, "what you have determined, but whether already you have overcome the passions of the flesh." "Henceforward," answers Augustine to himself—"henceforward I seek this kind no longer. I desire it no more. I remember it with dread and with disdain. What more can I say? This truth is growing upon me every day. I long to see what the Divine beauty really is. The more hope increases, the more my longing is centred there."

What of gluttony? "Give me enough for health. It is all I desire."

Augustine's ideal of the Christian life was already

[1] "Soliloquies," p. 608. [2] Ibid., p. 609. [3] Ibid., p. 610.

fixed. It would be the ascetic, the monastic life. Already he was strongly drawn in that direction. He had felt the force of its attractions—an ideal involving entire surrender, a complete abandonment of worldly standards, and the objects by which the worldly mind is dominated. A life of this order, by the very force of the noble contrast it presented to the sensual, self-indulgent paganism of his day, could not fail to win the sincerest admiration of a mind like Augustine's. But in the silence of his soliloquies he took himself to task about this desire as well as about all others. After all, what motives impelled him to seek a community life? It was to gain the knowledge of God and of his own soul.[1]

In this spirit of severity and truthfulness Augustine pursued his self-examination. Night after night he questioned himself again and again. Not for a moment would he presume to say that he had never wavered. His keen insight taught him how easily self-deception prevails. Nowhere does a man err more readily than in passing judgment upon his own character. To unravel the entanglement of motive, to realize his own ignorance, prejudice, passion, to estimate aright the relative influence of each and all of these, is but partially achieved even after the most deliberate, careful, ruthless scrutiny.

A man in such cases will frequently misjudge his own capacities. He honestly believes himself equal to some genuine self-surrender. He believes himself ready to ascend some altar-steps, there to offer without hesitation once and for ever some costly sacrifice, perhaps his life,

[1] "Soliloquies," p. 611.

his own heart, his will. And lo! at eventide the world returns upon him; the force of the old temptation is renewed. Bewildered, ashamed, humiliated, he has to acknowledge and bewail his utter ignorance of himself. He is weaker than he supposed, miserably weak: all confidence one hour and sin the next.

Even Augustine was not exempt from this experience. The high resolves of one night were shattered in a day. The pure ideal to which he accorded the full admiration of a generous soul was easily lost sight of when other thoughts, passionate, impure, tumultuous, enticing, thronged the avenues of his mind.

"The soul loves darkness in proportion as it is not healed. But the sun cannot be seen unless sight be restored. Herein the mind is often self-deceived. It thinks itself, it boasts itself restored, when all the while it is blind, it cannot see. But that Eternal Beauty knows when to reveal Itself." [1]

"When we have escaped out of the deeper darkness it seems to us that we can see. Unable to realize how deeply we were plunged, and whither we were sinking—it is only in comparison with that deeper darkness left behind us that we can as yet be justly said to have reached the light. Look you how only yesterday you pronounced yourself secure, no longer impeded by adverse influence, a lover of Wisdom, and of Wisdom alone, willing, nay eager, to cast aside all things in her behalf. Remember you how mean, how contemptible, how worthless, all other gain appeared to you, and all this only yesternight. But yet this night in your solitude, in your vigil, in your

[1] "Soliloquies," p. 615.

meditation, when returning to these thoughts again, have you not found yourself other than you had dreamed? Once more the sensual vision flooded your mind—imagination has painted you the picture of their former bewitching influence, and have you not yielded yourself to their lowering power?

"Not readily I will grant you—no, not readily as in the days gone by; but yet far otherwise have you conducted yourself from that which you had resolved. Thus has the great Physician taught you these two solemn truths. He has shown you out of what abyss by His mercy you have escaped. He has reminded you what vast labours remain before the soul can be entirely healed."

So Conscience whispered. And Augustine answered, "Be still, I beseech thee, be still. Torment me not."

Thus Augustine in the "Soliloquies" subjects his character to the most remorseless scrutiny. He weighs his motives; he pauses; he considers and reconsiders; he looks into the past, into the future, with its difficulties. Can he bear them? Can he make this sacrifice? He will not undertake to build without deliberately counting the cost. If he enters the Catholic Church by the gate of Baptism, it shall be the result of no sudden impulse, but the calm assent of the entire man; it shall be the issue of a real conviction. A conversion such as this will be solid, permanent, unwavering.

And, as a matter of fact, Augustine never looked back.

Augustine returned to Milan, probably at the beginning of Lent, 387. He received instruction as a catechumen, and on Easter Eve was baptized, together with his friend Alypius and his son Adeodatus. Famous, indeed, is that

group in the Baptistery of Milan, where S. Ambrose was the minister of the Sacrament, and S. Monica the witness.

Shortly after this consummation of Monica's prayers they resolved to return from Italy to their own land. One day Monica and Augustine held earnest conversation in a window of the house in Pontus. In a passage of inimitable eloquence Augustine describes how they spoke together of the life everlasting.

"Together we two held converse very sweet, and forgetting those things which were behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, we were discussing between us, in the presence of the truth which Thou art, of what kind would be that eternal life of the saints, which eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither hath it entered into the heart of man to conceive. . . . We wandered step by step through all material things, and even the very heaven, whence sun and moon and stars shed their light upon the earth. And further still we climbed, in inner thought and speech and in wonder of Thy works, and we reached to our own minds, and passed beyond them, so as to touch the realm of plenty never-failing, where Thou feedest Israel for ever in the pasture of Thy Truth. . . . We were saying then: if to any one should grow hushed the tumult of the flesh, hushed the images of earth and of the waters and the air, hushed, too, the poles; and if the very soul should be hushed to itself, and were by cessation of thought to pass beyond itself; if all dreams, all fond imaginings, every tongue and every token, and all things which pass away, were hushed to silence and were still—since, could any hear their real language, all things say, 'We created not ourselves, but He

made us Who abideth for ever'—and if, this said, they should now entirely cease to speak, because they had inclined our hearts to Him Who made them, and He Himself by Himself should speak, not through them, but of Himself, so that we should hear His Word, not uttered by human lips, nor angel-speaker, nor by thunder of cloud nor parable of comparison, but Himself, Whom in these we love;—if, I say, we should hear Him without these, as now we strained ourselves to hear Him . . . were not this an 'Enter thou into the joy of thy Lord'?" [1]

And in the midst of this solemn, almost ecstatic, meditation upon the life everlasting, Monica turned to Augustine and said—

"My son, as for myself, I delight no longer in anything in this life. What yet I may do here, and why I linger here I know not, now that the hope of life is dead within me. One thing alone there was which chained my longings here—to see you a Catholic Christian before my death. And this my God has granted me. Why do I tarry any longer here?" [2]

Five days later she was dying. And after a brief illness of only nine days, at the age of fifty-six, she was taken away from him.

Augustine lingers fondly and reverently over the recollections of Monica's devotional life—her exemplary piety, the high value she set upon spiritual direction, her constant reference to S. Ambrose in times of religious need, how she entered into the devotional practices of the Church at Milan; how she delighted in S. Ambrose's

[1] "Confessions," IX. x. 25, p. 284. Trans. Theological Library.
[2] Ibid.

hymns. Twice a day, morning and evening, without any intermission, she entered the church "that she might hear Thee in Thy discourse, and Thou her in her prayers." She never missed a day in attending the altar. Such was the religious life of this saintly mother of a saint.[1]

Augustine's crown of glory in the Church is as a teacher of the doctrine of Divine grace. But this cannot be recorded here. When Bossuet preached his panegyric on S. Augustine, it is said that he had intended to divide the subject into two parts—what grace had done for Augustine, and what Augustine had done for grace. But as he dwelt upon the theme what grace had done for Augustine, it expanded to such dimensions that no space remained to dwell upon what Augustine had done for grace. This must ever be the difficulty in recording Augustine's life. So important is the spiritual experience of his conversion, that it has been thought better to analyze it fully, rather than to narrate his life and labour in the Catholic Church. No space is left to tell the story of his priesthood and episcopate, his influence on the mind of Christendom second to none since S. Paul. Suffice it to say that this conversion was the beginning of a gradual growth in grace, extended over forty years of study and devotion and teaching. The key to all is in his own words: "Ever let that displease thee which thou art, if thou wouldest attain to what thou art not."[2]

[1] Cf. "De Ordine;" "Confessions," V. ix. [2] Sermon 169.

August 29

S. John Baptist beheaded

THE subject of S. John Baptist occupied a far more important place in the mind of the early Church than it does in the Church of modern days. The great teachers of Christendom continually dwell upon it. The beheading of S. John was commemorated in Africa in the fifth century, and was the theme of sermons by S. Augustine.[1]

1. The act of *Herodias* is painfully intelligible. When the spirit of vindictiveness is thoroughly roused in an unscrupulous character unrefined and unrestrained by the influences of religion and the love and the fear of God, it is not difficult to anticipate the pitilessness of its retaliation.

For the moment the one narrowing, devouring, and absorbing passion was to revenge herself upon the man who dared to call her sin by its proper name, to crush him out, to silence that voice in death, regardless of result either to herself or to Herod, or of the moral effect of her example upon the Court and the kingdom at large. And she was not disappointed of her desire. A masterful, imperious

[1] Sermons 307, 308.

woman, she stands out in lurid light, a signal instance of the peril of strong impulses unsanctified, and of the need of human nature to be controlled by all the awe-inspiring sanction of religion and by the power of Divine Grace.

2. Besides Herodias, Herod is strangely contrasted. Capable of good intentions and of being rightly moved when under helpful influences, he was afflicted with a piteous weakness by which he was constantly demoralized. He had weakly yielded to the fascination and ascendency of an unprincipled relationship. He had weakly imprisoned the man whom, nevertheless, he respected and consulted. He had weakly made most rash and foolish promises, and his weakness reached its utmost crisis in the hour of his dilemma, either to break his oath or sacrifice S. John. Still he vacillated between conscience and popularity, between the fear of God and the fear of man, and yielded, weak as ever, to the pressure of the visible and transient, while yet he vaguely felt with feeble uneasy misgivings the influence of the Invisible and the Eternal.

3. The death of S. John was a martyrdom incurred in defending the religious ideal of marriage. While Herod was one of those men who will not submit to the laws of their religion when it places a restraint upon their impulses, S. John had appealed to the religious law. "It is not lawful for thee to have her." Herod knew, of course, perfectly well that the argument of S. John was unanswerable. The law of religion was as certain as anything could well be. The Scripture, the statute book of Israel, taught as the prophet said. All that Herod had done or could do was to oppose the law of religion with another

ideal, a secular principle, which ultimately rested upon his own perverted will.

"It is not lawful." When S. John spoke of lawful he meant lawful according to the laws of religion. He was certainly not appealing—he would have been perfectly indifferent—to any sanctions granted by imperial power. If Herod could plead, "The laws of Rome permit," S. John could only answer, "But the laws of God forbid." Neither the will of Herod, nor of Cæsar, nor legislation of any kind, nor the majority of votes in the Roman Empire, could make permissible for Herod what the laws of his religion disallowed. Plainly no secular authority whatever can cancel a religious law or dispense the adherents of that religion from the duty of loyal obedience. If Herod had disowned his religion, then the appeal of S. John would have for him no longer any validity. But while Herod retained his religion, there was nothing for it but to abandon his position and to repent of it as a sin.

It is certainly profoundly significant that the herald of Jesus Christ should have yielded his life in defence of the marriage law.

September 1

S. Giles

S. ÆGIDIUS, better known to us as S. Giles, was by nation a Greek, born perhaps at Athens about the year 640. He came of illustrious if not royal descent, and had also the better distinction of a teachable and lovable character. As a boy he parted with his cloak to a beggar, and when his parents died "made Christ the heir to his possessions." In early manhood, probably about the age of twenty-five, he left the land of his birth, and, in order to follow the ascetic and lonely ideal of his religious teachers, crossed over the sea to the land of Provence, where he was utterly unknown.[1] He settled for a brief space near the city of Arles with only one companion, but, aspiring to still more perfect isolation, plunged into the depth of a forest in the Diocese of Nîmes, and thus, secure from human invasion in a safe retreat, spent his life in meditation and prayer. His only earthly companions were the beasts that roamed the forest, who seemed in his presence to lose their ancient fear of man; one in particular, a deer, went so far in its friendship as to share the cave which formed the hermit's

[1] A.D. 666.

dwelling. The records of the early anchorites are filled with instances of harmony between the men of prayer and the animal creation.

In this utter solitude S. Giles would seem to have passed some years, until at last his self-chosen exile was invaded by what might seem a trivial accident. One day the Gothic King, while hunting in the forest, pursued the deer to the cave where S. Giles was dwelling. The deer sprang in for refuge at the hermit's side. The King attempted eagerly to draw Giles back to human habitation, but, finding his efforts unavailing, he gave him the site for a monastery, over which Giles became the abbot, and ruled for fifty years.[1]

[1] A.D. 673.

September 7

S. Evurtius

HISTORY gives us little for certain about Evurtius (or Enurchus, as he is sometimes called) beyond the fact that he was a subdeacon of the Roman Church, who was sent on a mission to Orleans about the year 340, and became bishop of that city. The early history of the diocese of Orleans is lost in obscurity, but the name of Evurtius is one of the earliest, although not quite the first, recorded among the bishops of that see.[1] According to the legend—which is, however, of very doubtful value—Evurtius arrived a stranger at Orleans to find clergy and people engaged in electing a new bishop, but unable to arrive at any conclusion. The problem of rival claims was miraculously solved by the selection of Evurtius. It would seem that the labours of Evurtius were crowned by the ingathering of multitudes. The cathedral church had to be rebuilt because the ancient sanctuary could not contain the number of believers. S. Evurtius died about A.D. 391.

[1] See "Gallia Christiana," viii. 1410.

September 8

Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary

WHEN the Church commemorates the birthday of a saint, what is almost invariably meant is the day of his death, which is the day of his birth into the world invisible.

To this rule the Calendar contains three exceptions, the Nativity of S. John the Baptist, the Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary, and the Nativity of our Blessed Lord. All these commemorate the natural birth.

The Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary was not commemorated in the Church as early as the other two, for S. Augustine, preaching on the Nativity of S. John the Baptist, says that the Church observed only two nativities, that of S. John the Baptist and that of Christ.[1] But what was unknown to S. Augustine came into devotional observance certainly not later than century seven. In the eleventh century S. Peter Damian, preaching on the festival, describes it as a day most rightly kept by the universal Church.[2]

To the event commemorated no allusion is found in Holy Scripture. "Perhaps," says Benedict XIV., "some

[1] Sermon 287. [2] Sermon 45.

will wonder that we say nothing on the Nativity of the Blessed Virgin. But since the Holy Scripture maintains unbroken silence concerning it, we think it wisest to be silent ourselves."[1] More especially did Pope Benedict believe this wise, since writers had elaborated narratives drawn from legendary sources.

Nothing whatever is known of the Virgin's early life. Even the names of her parents are not absolutely certain, although it is generally believed that she was the daughter of S. Joachim and S. Anne.[2]

But the fact of her nativity was commemorated in the Church as the necessary antecedent to the Incarnation. In the birth of the Blessed Virgin the Divine Power and Wisdom and Love had created her whom He predestined to the highest honour ever granted to a creature, that of becoming the mother of His Everlasting Son. Mediæval writers delighted to take the words, "Wisdom hath builded her house,"[3] and apply them to the Divine Wisdom creating the mother of our Lord. The Nativity of Mary prepared the way for the Incarnation. The house must be builded before the King could come. S. Peter Damian, for example, does not hesitate to say, "As it was impossible for the human race to be redeemed unless the Son of God was born of a Virgin, so it was necessary for the Virgin to be born of whom the Word of God should be Incarnate."

[1] "De Fesis B. V. M.," cap. ix. 12; Migne, vol. xxvi. 614.
[2] See July 26.
[3] Prov. ix. 1.

September 14

Holy Cross Day

"Blessed is the Wood whereby Righteousness cometh."—Wisdom xiv. 7.

TWO days are assigned in the Calendar to the commemoration of the Holy Cross, May 3rd and September 14th. The former is known as the Invention, the latter as the Exaltation of the Cross, and they refer to different incidents in the history of the actual wood of the Passion. The Invention is the discovery of the Cross by Empress Helena in 335, the Exaltation is the restoration of the wood of the Cross to Jerusalem in 628, after its temporary removal. When the city of Jerusalem was captured by Chosroes, King of the Persians, in 614, a long train of captives was led away, among whom was the Patriarch, who bore with him the relic of the Cross.

A few years later the Emperor Heraclius retook the city, and made peace with the Persians on condition that the Cross should be restored. That condition was fulfilled. Heraclius laid his royal robe aside, and, in the humblest vesture himself, restored the Cross to its place of honour in the Church of the Holy City. This is called the Exaltation of the Cross.

The value attached by Christians, as early as the second century, to the sign of the cross is too well known

to need description. It is enough to quote the Canons of 1603.

"The honour and dignity of the name of the cross begat a reverend estimation even in the Apostles' times (for aught that is known to the contrary) of the sign of the cross, which the Christians shortly after used in all their actions: thereby making an outward show and profession, even to the astonishment of the Jews, that they were not ashamed to acknowledge Him for their Lord and Saviour Who died for them upon the cross. And this sign they did not only use themselves with a kind of glory when they met with any Jews, but signed therewith their children when they were christened, to dedicate them by that badge to His service Whose benefits bestowed upon them in Baptism the name of the cross did represent. And this use of the sign of the cross in Baptism was held in the primitive Church, as well by the Greeks as the Latins, with one consent and great applause. At what time, if any had opposed themselves against it, they would certainly have been censured as enemies of the name of the cross, and consequently of Christ's merits, the sign whereof they could no better endure. This continual and general use of the sign of the cross is evident by many testimonies of the ancient Fathers."

The reply of King James at the Hampton Court Conference to the Puritan objection to the sign of the cross has more than an historical interest.

"Dr. Reynolds objected the example of the brazen serpent, demolished and stampt to powder by Ezechias, because the people abused it to idolatry, wishing that in like sort the cross should be abandoned, because, in the time of

popery, it had been superstitiously abused. Whereunto the King's Majesty answered divers wayes. 'First,' quoth he, 'though I be sufficiently persuaded of the cross in Baptism, and the commendable use thereof in the Church so long; yet, if there were nothing else to move me, this very argument were an inducement to me for the retaining of it, as it is now by order established: for inasmuch as it was abused, so you say, to superstition in the time of popery, it doth plainly imply that it was well used before popery. I will tell you, I have lived among this sort of men [speaking to the lords and bishops] ever since I was tenne years old, but I may say of myself as Christ did of Himself, though I lived amongst them, yet since I had ability to judge I was never of them; neither did any thing make me more to condemn, and detest their courses, than that they did so peremptorily disallow of all things which at all had been used in popery. For my part, I know not how to answer the objection of the papists when they charge us with novelties, but truely to tell them that their abuses are new, but the things which they abused we retain in their primitive use, and forsake only the novel corruption. By this argument we might renounce the Trinity, and all that is holy, because it was abused in popery: [and speaking to Dr. Reynolds merrily] they used to wear hose and shoes in popery, therefore you shall now go barefoot.'"

The demolition of the crucifix at the Reformation was in part an almost inevitable recoil from the figures made to weep or shed blood with which the popular mind had been familiarized. But reactions from one extreme are just as likely as not to reach an opposite extreme, and a

no less dangerous one. And as the Canons remind us, the abuse of a thing does not take away its lawful use.

The sign of the cross in the solitary instance of its baptismal use had resisted successfully all Puritan attempts at its removal. But beyond that the cross had gone into captivity. It could not well be effaced from the ground plan of a cruciform building, but wherever possible it was taken away.

The crucifix was described by the historian Hume as "that eternal consolation of all pious Catholics, and terror to all sound Protestants." Somehow the sound Protestant to whom the crucifix was a terror failed to see how inconsistent it was to accuse the Catholic for not preaching Christ and at the same time for placing the crucifix everywhere. They who upheld the crucifix before the living and the dying agreed in action with one who said, "I determine not to know anything among you, save Jesus Christ, and Him crucified."

The aversion with which the sceptical mind of Strauss regarded the crucifix is but another indication of its religious momentousness.

After reminding us of the well-known fact that the Lutherans have retained the crucifix upon their altars, Strauss observes, "This old chief symbol of Christianity the Catholic Church is extravagantly fond of placing up and down the country-side; the Protestant Church, in so far as it did not put it on one side with other images, has at least, with a kind of shame, removed it to the interior of churches and houses, besides allowing the empty cross to stand on cemeteries, steeples, and the like. . . . The crucifix is, on the one hand, the visible and tangible pledge

of the remission of sins to the faithful; on the other, the deification of sorrow generally. It is humanity in its saddest plight; . . . it is the most one-sided rigid embodiment of Christian world-renunciation and passivism. In a symbol of this kind, mankind, rejoicing in life and action, can now no longer find the expression of its religious consciousness; and the continued regard accorded to it in the modern Protestant Church is, after all, but one more of those compromises and untruths which make it a thing of such feeble vitality."

Strauss, therefore, would advocate the removal of this symbol of remission of sins. The very grounds upon which the sceptical mind advocates its effacement, are precisely those which should endear it to Christian devotion. The crucifix, as he fully understands, is indeed the most perfect conceivable symbol of remission, of sacrifice, of the deification of sorrow, or rather revelation of divine sorrow, and since he rejects these spiritual realities, he would quite consistently reject the symbol in which they find expression. But men to whom those spiritual realities are the foundation of religious hope ought surely to revere the symbol in which they are visibly embodied.

Symbolism is, says Reville,[1] indispensable to religion. Symbolism "is connected with the need which man experiences of materializing and of expressing his impressions, his sentiment, and his convictions." It gives substance, a sort of visible and tangible reality, and helps man to realize its certainty. The religious symbol may become deceptive, as all symbols may. But that is no

[1] Prolegomena of the "History of Religions," p. 125.

fault of the symbol. In its original intention the symbol is always sincere.

Thus, says Reville, there will be in religion symbols of submission, symbols of grief, symbols of joy, symbols of purity. "Symbolism is, then, quite a language, as rich as it is varied, of which we must learn in some sort the vocabulary and the grammar if we would understand religion."

The loss to English devotion resulting from the removal of external reminders of the Passion is simply incalculable.

It may be worth while on this subject to reproduce the well-known words of one who certainly will not be suspected of Romanizing tendencies. Dr. Arnold's teaching on the value of the crucifix as an aid to devotion may very possibly gain attention where the opinion of others might be disregarded.

"In the crypt at Bourges is a calvary and figures as large as life representing the burying of our Lord. The woman who showed us the crypt had her little girl with her, and she lifted up the child, about three years old, to kiss the feet of our Lord. Is this idolatry? Nay, verily, it may be so, but it need not be, and assuredly is in itself right and natural. I confess I rather envied the child. It is idolatry to talk about Holy Church and Holy Fathers, bowing to fallible and sinful men, and not to bend knee, lip, and heart to every thought and every image of Him, our manifested God." [1]

"Where the New Testament is kept out of the people's hands, and their knowledge of Christianity is corrupted

[1] "Life of Dr. Arnold," ii. 350.

with many superstitions, the crucifix may be often an object of superstitious worship; so that, very possibly, the English reformers were right at that time in doing away with the use of it. But I cannot conceive it otherwise than useful where the Scriptures are generally circulated, and where Christianity is truly known; and as it may be most dangerous where men are most attached to it, so I think it is most wanted where the feeling against it would be the strongest, as in England at this moment, and still more in Scotland."[1]

"It is manifest to every thinking person that the fact of the Incarnation was a virtual repeal of the letter of the Second Commandment. For in the Person of Jesus Christ there was given us an Image of God which we might and should represent to ourselves in our own minds; and what our thoughts and minds may lawfully and profitably dwell upon may clearly be no less lawfully and profitably presented to our bodily sense: if it be right and useful to think of Christ—and by that very Name we mean, not the abstract notion of deity, but God made man—the most effectual means of bringing Him vividly present to our mind must be the best; and this is best effected, as is proved by the common feeling of mankind with regard to portraits, by enabling ourselves in some sort actually to see Him."

"And, again, all the superstition connected with the wood of the true cross, or with the sacredness of any particular image of our Lord, is perfectly distinct from the Christian use of the crucifix, and has arisen merely from a general ignorance of the Gospel. If our Lord Himself were to

[1] "Sermons," ii. 292. 1828–1831.

return to earth, no Christian, I suppose, would refuse to worship Him; yet it would be a gross superstition to believe that His actual Presence would of itself save us, or that to touch His garments would at once secure us from the judgment of God. Now, what it were superstition to believe of Himself, it is, of course, superstition to believe of His image; but if His living Presence impressed His words more deeply on our hearts, would it be superstition then to seek His company? and if His image, though in a less degree, produce the same effect, if it keep Him in our remembrance and recall our wandering thoughts to Him, is it superstition to use such an aid?" [1]

The lives of the saints commemorated in the Calendar of the English Church give frequent testimonies to the devotional value of the cross, or crucifix, and no solitary instance is found on the other side. Not one of these saintly persons can well be conceived engaged in the removal from Christian worship of every sign of the cross, or in the universal abolition of the crucifix, or regarding them in any other way than with reverence and deep belief in their devotional usefulness.

When S. Ambrose was dying it was with hands extended in the form of a cross.[2] So it was with S. Lambert[3] of Maestricht. When S. Richard of Chichester was dying they gave him a crucifix, which he held in his hands, and kissed with deepest venerating love the sacred wounds.[4] Examples such as these show how the crucifix has helped and supported and kindled the devotion of saints.

[1] "Sermons," ii. 26.
[2] See April 4.
[3] See Sept. 17.
[4] See April 3.

The sign of the cross is now being generally exalted to a place in our devotions from which it had long been removed. The Festival of the Exaltation of the Cross has for the English Church at the present time a peculiar appropriateness.

September 17

S. Lambert

LAMBERT was born about the year 635 in what is now the extreme south-east of Holland, in the town of Maestricht, then part of the vast dominions of the Merovingian kings. The family of Clovis were in their degeneracy. His great dominions, divided into the two separate realms of Neustria and Austrasia, were nominally ruled by his incompetent descendants, but actually by the increasingly powerful mayors of the palace. A long series of Childerics and Clotaires, regal nonentities, served as figure-heads, to be produced splendidly dressed on state occasions, and then sent back to their natural obscurity and indolence until required and sent for again. Ebroin, Mayor of Neustria, was for the time in the ascendant, and his power had serious results on the work and career of Lambert, as will presently be shown.

Lambert was the son of wealthy parents and heir to many generations of Christian faith. His parents' names are not recorded in the early biography, which was written by a contemporary; but they did their utmost to train him in sacred learning, for which, to their joy, he displayed considerable aptitude, and became the favourite pupil of Theodard,

Bishop of Maestricht, who regarded him as the most suitable to become his own successor. Theodard was not permitted to take steps in this direction, for in the insecurities of that turbulent age the bishop met a violent death while on the way to appeal to King Childeric against the plunderers of his Church. But Theodard's desire was fulfilled by common consent of Childeric and the people, and Lambert became Bishop of Maestricht.[1]

Childeric was at this moment at the height of his power. The crown of Neustria had been presented to him in addition to that of Austrasia, which he already held; and Ebroin, the Neustrian mayor, only avoided death by submission to the tonsure and monastic seclusion. But Childeric swiftly alienated all men by the violence of his passions and the arbitrariness of his rule, until at last, in an hour of national desperation, he and his wife and child were massacred. The fall of Childeric meant the return of Ebroin to power. The statesman who became a monk now became a statesman again. He threw aside with his monastic robe his interest in the Church, and appeared a resolute opponent of all whom Childeric favoured, and in particular of Lambert, Bishop of Maestricht. Lambert found himself now remorselessly driven out, while Faramond, a selection of Ebroin, was intruded into his see. It is said that Ebroin was afraid of Lambert's influence. Lambert accepted this reversal with Christian patience and humility, and entered as a simple monk in the Monastery of Stavelot, south of Liége. For the next seven years he lived a life of obedience and exemplary humility. To this period belongs the famous story of Lambert's

[1] C. A.D. 670.

submissiveness. One night in winter, when the monks rose for their devotions, Lambert accidentally dropped his wooden shoe with a clatter on the floor, and the abbot, hearing the noise and thinking the rule of silence had been broken, sent orders that the offender should go out and say his prayers at the cross near the church in the open air. Lambert instantly, without waiting to put on his outer robe, went silently forth barefoot, and knelt in the bitter cold and snow by the cross and prayed. When the monks had said their office, and some time after gathered to warm themselves at the fire, the abbot noticed that Lambert was not there, and inquired what had become of him. The answer was that he had not come back from the cross. Then the abbot knew what he had done. In his dismay he threw himself at Lambert's feet and entreated his forgiveness. "God forgive you," said Lambert, "for thinking you needed to be forgiven." But the lesson of obedience and humility made a profound impression on the Convent of Stavelot.

Seven years passed in this life of humble obscurity, when another revolution in the outer world threw Ebroin out of power, and slew him, and brought Lambert back to his episcopal duties.[1] Pepin, of Herstall, the new Mayor of the Palace, undid as far as might be Ebroin's work. Faramond, the intruder, disappeared, and Lambert, to the joy of his people, was restored to his rightful place.

This last period of the bishop's life was distinguished by pioneering labours for the conversion of the heathen. Lambert could not rest content with ministrations to his Christian flock. The spirit of the Apostles came upon him. Heathen peoples lay close at hand, within a few miles of

[1] A.D. 681.

his church and city. Lambert therefore went forth for their conversion.

The missionary labours of Lambert concur in place and time with those of Wilfrid's pupil, Willibrord, who, after being trained in the monastery at Ripon, came over to the Rhine in 690. Willibrord was not yet Archbishop of Utrecht, but only a simple priest in the days when Lambert knew him. Thus Lambert was linked in friendship with a mission priest of our own country.

Lambert's labours were rewarded with a harvest which must have gladdened his soul. He seems to have excelled in the grace of persuasiveness, and while at first encountering much opposition, to have won to himself their confidence, and to the Faith their submission.

These apostolic labours were soon to be terminated by a violent death. The bishop's church at Maestricht was beset and plundered. Whereupon, without consulting Lambert, his friends retaliated, and slew ten of the plunderers. The bishop was, not unnaturally, although most unjustly, identified with an act which he abhorred, and singled out for merciless retaliation. The dead plunderers may have deserved their fate, but they had a friend at Court, a relative rich and powerful holding office under Pepin of Herstall. When Dodo heard how his relatives were slain, he armed his followers for revenge, and surrounded Bishop Lambert in the village afterwards the episcopal city of Liége. Lambert's servant saw in the morning that an armed force had encircled them, and hastened to awaken his master. The bishop's first impulse, suddenly roused, was to grasp a sword as in self-defence. "But," says the biographer, "Christ was not far from him, and he instantly

laid the weapon aside." Meanwhile his two nephews took clubs. They would die fighting. But Lambert forbade it. He saw in the attack a Divine judgment on the previous act of violence. "Their blood is required at our hands." He saw distinctly in a moment that his own life must be a vicarious sacrifice for the blood shed by the Church's avengers.

The armed men had now reached the house. They battered in the door. In the upper chamber Lambert, left alone, lay down upon the floor, extended his arms in the form of a cross, and in prayer and tears awaited the coming of his enemies. Soon they burst into the room, and with one spear-thrust stabbed him where he lay; and so he died.

It was said of Lambert after his death that he honoured men according to their goodness, and not in proportion to their power; that he was sensitively averse to anything approaching display, especially to wearing the costly raiment sometimes presented to him as appropriate to his rank. He leaves the impression of one who, living in turbulent and distracting times, acquired his soul in patience, and dwelt in pure unworldliness.

September 26

S. Cyprian

CYPRIAN of Carthage was well known in his heathen days as an eloquent advocate almost at the head of the legal profession; an orator, with the fervid African temperament, gifted with remarkable memory and great power of administration, the wealthy owner of a fine estate.

He was a man of mature age and assured position when the Divinity of the Christian Faith came home to him as a living reality through the personal influence of one of the clergy at Carthage, the priest Cæcilian, in the days when Donatus was the bishop. The student of Roman law now devoted himself assiduously to the Holy Scriptures, which he stored in a most retentive memory, and advanced in knowledge with great rapidity.

His favourite Christian writer was his fellow-countryman, the fiery, rugged, sarcastic, passionate Tertullian. Every day he would read some portion of those powerful pages, and would ask his secretary for the manuscript, saying, "Give me the Master"—a study from which he managed to derive the author's goodness without his eccentricities.

Cyprian was baptized in 246. In a letter, written to a friend shortly after the time when he thus became a Christian, full of the old rhetorical exuberance which he deprecates but employs, he explains the emotions with which he regarded Christianity in the pagan days. He is in his secluded gardens at Carthage in the mild autumn, remote from the clatter of a slave household, admiring the beauty of the trailing vines and the landscape opening out beyond. By no means insensible to natural grace, Cyprian reflects on this inmost spiritual experience. He had not been converted all at once. He halted for long between error and truth. In the time when he was still lying in dark and gloomy night, uncertain and wandering, the Christian doctrine of Regeneration—being born again—appeared to his mind almost incredible. How, he asked, was such conversion possible? How could there be complete deliverance from the inborn corruption of our nature or the habit by long use become inveterate?

"These were my frequent thoughts. For as I myself was held in bonds by the innumerable errors of my previous life, from which I did not believe that I could possibly be delivered, so I was disposed to acquiesce in my clinging vices; and because I despaired of better things, I used to indulge my sins as if they were actually part of me, and indigenous to me. But after that, by the help of the Water of New Birth, the stain of former years had been washed away, and a light from above, serene and pure, had been infused into my reconciled heart,—after that, by the agency of the Spirit breathed from heaven, a second birth had restored me to a new man, then, in a wondrous manner, doubtful things at once began to assure

themselves to me, hidden things to be revealed, dark things to be enlightened, what before had seemed difficult began to suggest a means of accomplishment, what had been thought impossible to be capable of being achieved." [1]

Between these two states—the state before Regeneration and the state after it—lay the distance between earth and heaven. In the regenerating Water of Holy Baptism the old stains had been washed away and his heart filled with new and unutterable peace in the knowledge of reconciliation with God. No language could do justice to the change which at the font had taken place within him. He understood, at any rate, the meaning of the words, "a new creature." Hitherto he had lived the natural existence, of the earth, earthy. There is no reason to suppose that his heathen days were stained with exceptional sin, yet he was not free from those evils which accompany an ignorance of Christ and the worship of idols; and, judged from the standpoint of his conversion, the mere life of the natural man was itself sufficiently condemned—for "the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God."

Cyprian was, perhaps, describing his own surroundings when he said that—"Ceilings enriched with gorgeous gildings, and walls encrusted with costly marbles, will seem poor to you when once you realize that it is rather yourself who must be perfected and adorned; and that that house is far more glorious wherein God is indeed enthroned, and where His Eternal Spirit deigns to dwell. Let *this* house be enriched with the beauty of innocence and glow with the light of truth which the passage of the

[1] Ep. 1.

years shall never reduce to decay, whose colours shall never tarnish nor their beauty fade." [1]

The inner change which had passed upon Cyprian's soul found outward expression in large-hearted charity. He parted with his beautiful gardens, and gave the proceeds to the relief of the poor. The costliness of the sacrifice may be measured by the eloquent terms in which he expresses his delight in them. However, Cyprian was not permitted to make this sacrifice, after all, for friends bought back the property and presented it to him, a generous act, proving how Cyprian was regarded in the circle of those who knew him best.

But Cyprian's special gifts lay not so much in a reflective as in a practical direction. Almost everything he wrote was called out by the needs of the moment, and his thoughts were quickly translated into action. Where, above all, he excelled was in administration; and the Church at Carthage fully realized the greatness of their recent convert. When the Bishop of Carthage died,[2] the popular will resolved to elect Cyprian, novice though he was, to the place of peril and pre-eminence. Cyprian's reluctance was the expression of sincerest humility. He withdrew, and concealed himself for a time, but vainly, from the eager search of the people. His house was positively besieged, crowds blocked each avenue of approach, and Cyprian was compelled to yield himself to an enthusiastic decision in which he might naturally find an expression of a higher will than man's.

But Cyprian's election, although the work of an overwhelming majority, was not unanimous. There remained,

[1] Ep. 1. [2] A.D. 248.

resisting and discontented, a small but embittered minority —five priests and their followers—destined to be the cause of miserable divisions and unhappiness in the Church of that city, and beyond it; destined to leave a warning to other ages that disappointed ambition or personal jealousy may easily become one of the secret and perhaps, to those who are afflicted by it, unsuspected motives of schism.

Cyprian's spiritual development had been exceedingly rapid. He was advanced in Christian character far beyond many who had spent a lifetime in the Christian fold. Placed at the head of the Church in Carthage, his task was to infuse nobler ideals into relaxed and half-worldly congregations. The long peace of the Church, its exemptions from outward persecution, had told disastrously on the standard of its spiritual life. Entrance into the Church had offered no material attractions in the days of the martyrs, but it was otherwise now; and even in the highest places unprincipled or secularized persons held the authority, while they contradicted the example of Apostles. The condition of Africa's Church life drawn by Cyprian is full of gloom. To awaken to reality, to infuse earnestness, was the tremendous task which Cyprian's episcopate imposed upon him.

I.—*Cyprian's First Trial.*

The African Church was indeed to be restored, but not altogether from within.

The instrument by which the Almighty purified these sons of Levi, and purged them as gold and silver, that they might offer unto the Lord an offering in righteousness,

was the scourge of *persecution*. Into the midst of their security fell, unforeseen and unprepared for, the terrible Decian persecution. A sudden change in the imperial succession placed Decius on the throne, and resulted in the publication of an edict denouncing Christianity. All persons accused or suspected of adherence to that forbidden religion were required on a certain day to renounce it, and offer sacrifice to the heathen deities.

The effect of the edict was to sift the Church of Carthage into five or six clearly distinguished classes.

1. Some instantly apostatized. Swarms of nominal Christians, the unrealities of the Church, crowded up to the magistrates as if eager to seize the opportunity for a public denial of their faith, exciting the jeers of the pagan, the astonishment of the faithful.

2. A second class obtained certificates of compliance with the imperial demand, although, as the magistrates were aware, they had not actually sacrificed. Such certificates could easily be purchased from avaricious officers of the court, or were secured by friendship or sympathy, or were offered and even pressed upon the hesitating. These purchased exemptions might easily be regarded as a fine, and much might be technically urged in their defence. But it is clear that they involved a departure from veracity, an assertion of compliance which was contrary to fact. Nevertheless, it would seem that thousands escaped the ordeal of physical anguish, and satisfied their conscience in this way.

3. A third class took a nobler course. Feeling themselves unequal to confronting the torturer's ghastly skill, yet no less incapable of descending to untruthfulness, they

acted upon the scriptural advice, "When they persecute you in one city, flee ye to another." They withdrew from motives of fear, thereby avoiding the unequal strife, yet at the same time incurring the severe penalties of confiscation and loss of all their worldly possessions.

4. In a class by himself must be placed the bishop. He, too, withdrew, but certainly not from motives of fear; it was for the sake of the Church. Cyprian himself determined upon a course which, being the more inglorious and open to misinterpretation, did in his lifetime, as it has done ever since, leave him liable to charges of cowardice completely alien to his noble nature.[1] He withdrew himself for the time into a place of safety—assuredly prompted by no motive of fear, but because the persecution was at first chiefly directed against the bishops of the Churches, because he had been repeatedly demanded for the lions by the crowds in the amphitheatre, and because for the sake of his people he believed that it was best.

It was, says one who knew him, and afterwards wrote his career, providential. He was reserved to inspire courage into others, to teach others, to bring the apostate to penitence, to restore wanderers to unity. Nor did the thought of concealment originate from himself;[2] it came as the urgent counsel of men qualified to advise. Cyprian firmly believed that his duty to God and the Church required this refusal of the opportunity of martyrdom. So dangerous was the place of bishop at this time that the Roman Church remained for sixteen months without a bishop. They would not select one of their leading men for immediate death.

[1] See Archbishop Benson, "Life of S. Cyprian," p. 86. [2] Ep. 14.

5. Others remained, but failed. Under the anguish of extreme suffering the constancy of some gave way, their power of endurance was broken, and, to their own grief and horror, pain forced them to deny their strongest convictions. Downcast, humiliated, and ashamed, they departed from the place of suffering amid the scoffs of the pagan populace, who disowned them, and the averted looks of the Christians, whom they had compromised and dishonoured. None, surely, deserving sincerer sympathy.

6. Finally, there were the Confessors—those who remained and conquered.

The priest Numidian by his earnest exhortations led many to win the martyr's crown. This intrepid spirit had seen his own wife burnt, and he himself endured the torture by fire, and was left for dead, when his daughter found him breathing still; and at last Numidian opened his eyes, and wept to find himself not in Paradise, but only on the earth. What could human cruelty avail against such all-conquering faith? Facts such as these might surely have warned even the heathen on which side victory must ultimately remain. And this was one of the men whom Cyprian desired to consecrate to the Episcopate.

Two letters full of pathetic interest remain to show how these brave servants of Christ comforted and strengthened one another.

Celerius, a sufferer at Rome, cruelly tortured but now liberated, writes to Lucian, a victim in the prison of Carthage.[1] In a letter full of strong faith and Christian humility he says that he has himself made "a purple confession"—that is, in Scripture words, resisted unto blood.

[1] Ep. 20.

"Entreat that I may be worthy, even I, to be crowned among yourselves. Know, nevertheless, that I am in great tribulation." This tribulation is not for himself, but for his sister's sake. For she is dead—dead not in body, but in soul; she has apostatized, she has fallen from Christ, she has sacrificed and provoked her Lord. For her unhappy fall Celerius spends Easter Day in tears. He believes that Christ will have mercy on her if His martyrs entreat for her.

Lucian in his reply says that he and Paul had been by the Emperor's order shut in separate cells to be starved to death. The fire of their anguish was intolerable. Already Paul was dead. Bassus died in the dungeon, Paul after torture; and many others have followed them, "of whom," writes Lucian, in terms infinitely pathetic in their simplicity, "you will hear of me in a few days as a companion." During five days he had received a morsel of bread and a little water; then for eight days nothing. In virtue of his sufferings he asks that those unhappy ones who had not power to endure should be restored to peace after their case had been set before the bishop and confession made. Lucian sends his greeting to some whose names he mentions, and to many whose names he cannot now record, for he is very weary, evidently dying.[1]

But Cyprian, if absent in body, was present in spirit. He directed the work of the Church by continual letters, pleaded for the poor, commended the sufferers to especial care, gave orders that the confessors in prison should be visited, yet only by a selected few of the clergy least likely to be arrested, so that the Holy Eucharist

[1] Ep. 21.

should be constantly ministered. Thus he deliberately exercised and counselled prudence; and while ensuring the discharge of the Church's mission, advised the avoidance of anything which would needlessly attract the ruthless persecutor's attention.[1]

To the confessors themselves Cyprian sagaciously mingled counsel and praise. While "the glory of the Church is the glory of the bishop,"[2] yet he warns the bravest against self-esteem. "Behold, thou art made a confessor; 'sin no more, lest a worse trial come upon thee.' We may praise no man before his death."[3] But their sufferings had gone to his heart. The limbs beaten and torn overcame the hooks which beat and tore them. The cruel scourgings, oft repeated, could not conquer them, although it was no longer their limbs but their very wounds which were scourged. The horrible flowing of blood suggests to him the beautiful words, "The Church was white before with the good deeds of faithful men; she is now red with the blood of her martyrs. Among her flowers are wanting neither roses nor lilies."[4]

"Right dear in the sight of the Lord is the death of His saints" was the Scripture phrase in which Cyprian and the Church of his age expressed their thankfulness over their martyred brethren.[5] How did Christ rejoice! He was present at His own contest. He Who once conquered death on our behalf always conquers it in us. Christ wrestles in the person of the martyr. Christ not only crowns, but Himself is crowned. Thus the emotions of the Church are not sorrow and mourning, but thanksgiving and joy. When

[1] Ep. 14. Oxford Edition. [2] Ep. 6. [3] Eccles. xi. 28. Ep. 5.
[4] Ep. 8. [5] Ep. 10.

Cyprian writes of "the tears of our Mother the Church who mourns over the wreck and death of so many," it is not death, but apostasy, of which he is speaking. When the confessors in prison hear of their brethren's martyrdom they refuse to call it death. "I will not say their deaths, but their immortalities." [1]

To Cyprian's encouraging letters the confessors replied as pupils to a master. His letter has come to them like a reassuring calm in the midst of a troubled sea. The Lord will reward him for his love. The credit of their victory belongs to him whose teaching trained them. Genuine outpourings of gratitude such as these, revealing the confessors' admiration for their bishop, are perhaps the most eloquent justification of Cyprian's withdrawal from the scene of danger. We see the full concurrence and approval of those who remained to suffer.[1]

II.—*Cyprian's Second Trial.*

It was natural and almost inevitable that upon these brave and noble victors in the strife men should bestow an admiration and a praise dangerous to their mental balance. It seems harsh to say it, but in some cases their very triumph became their peril. The feebler multitude of the lapsed beset the victors with importunate and piteous entreaties, seeking readmission to the privileges of the Church on the strength of the victors' noble deeds. Thus encircled with admiration and entreaty, the confessors, or rather the more ignorant and self-confident among their number, assumed an authority unexampled in Christendom

[1] Ep. 31.

and subversive of all discipline, the right to restore the fallen to the privileges of the Church without the bishop's consent or knowledge.

Cyprian, in his retreat, received from the Confessor Lucian a letter which can only be characterized as audacious.[1] Lucian assured the bishop that the confessors had granted readmission to all the lapsed whose conduct subsequent to their failure had been deserving, and requests Cyprian to make this decision known to the other bishops. Cyprian replied with reserve and dignity that nothing could be done until the peace of the Church was restored. Cyprian was thus forced into the painful and invidious necessity of opposing some of the bravest men in his Church. He was compelled reluctantly to say that Lucian, although strong in faith and of exceeding goodness, was scantily versed in Holy Scripture, and, in fact, an ignorant person.[2] Lucian forgot that martyrs cannot make the gospel, but are made by it.

Cyprian points out that to give certificates admitting a man and his friends to communion with the Church was an act which stood self-condemned. Wholesale, indiscriminate readmission could neither be good for the individuals received nor for the Church which received them. It ignored the endless degrees of guilt which certainly existed among the lapsed.[3] And the extent to which this innovation had advanced rendered it impossible for Cyprian not to intervene. He says that thousands of certificates were being daily given.[4] The difficulty was to reconcile the honour due to the martyr with the honour due to the gospel. The more sober-minded among the confessors

[1] Ep. 16. [2] Ep. 22. [3] Ep. 10. [4] Ep. 14.

concurred in the judgment of their bishop, and with him deprecated their brethren's undue assumption of authority. If the lapsed were in danger of death, they might be restored before they died. And those who since their lapse had recalled their denial, and this in public, and were consequently banished, ought justly to be regarded as reconciled to the Church. But the others must wait.[1] Certain of the clergy, remembering neither the gospel nor their own subordinate position, considering, moreover, neither the Lord's future judgment nor the bishop now placed over them, claim to themselves entire authority, to the discredit and contempt of their bishop, a thing never in any wise done under Cyprian's predecessors.[2] It was not right that the lapsed should be permitted to receive the Eucharist before penitence, before confession, before imposition of hands by the bishop and clergy. Unless these priests desist, Cyprian threatens to use his authority, and summon them before himself and the people on his return.

As for the lapsed themselves, let them knock at the doors of the Church, but not break them down.[3] They should exhibit the humility suggested in the rebuke, "Remember from whence thou art fallen, and repent."[4] Meanwhile any priest venturing to readmit them is excommunicate.[5]

III.—*Cyprian's Third Trial.*

S. Cyprian's first great trial was the persecution. His second was the trouble about the lapsed; his third, which followed immediately upon it, was *the schism*, caused by

[1] Ep. 18, 19. [2] Ep. 10. [3] Ep. 31.
[4] Ep. 27. [5] Ep. 27, 28.

the five priests, when Novatus, a priest of questionable character, had strongly advocated against Cyprian the claims of the lapsed to speedy restoration after brief penance or none. After maintaining vehemently these maxims, he paid a visit to Rome, where he fell in with Novatian, a narrow-minded man, in temperament gloomy, in character upright and austere. Novatian, while he deeply pitied the lapsed, denied the possibility of restoring them even on their death-bed to communion with the Church on earth. They were to be urged to repentance, but were excluded for life from the Church's fellowship. Novatian pushed this Puritan ideal to its extreme conclusion, that a Church which readmitted them to communion unchurched itself. The austere, unbending nature of the man led him to withdraw from the Church in Rome, and to become the founder and head of a Puritan schism, which was intended to contain the wheat without the tares. Novatus, being in this man's companionship at Rome, by some unexplained reaction wheeled round to Novatian's opinions. Was it, as some have thought, that love of opposition was in Novatus stronger than love of truth? At any rate, he now adopted opinions the exact reverse of those recently advocated by him in Africa. And he returned to Carthage as the representative Puritan, equally opposed to Cyprian, but on different grounds. And while the Church continued with Cyprian to hold a more merciful and spiritual ideal, a considerable section came under the Puritan's influence. Thus Novatus became the founder of a schism.

All the saintly bishop's labours and writings were now directed to healing the schism of the Puritan.[1]

[1] See Ep. 43.

The practical needs of his time led Cyprian to lay great stress on the Episcopate as the centre of Unity. "The bishop is in the Church, and the Church is in the bishop, and if any one is not with the bishop he is not in the Church." [1]

But, after all, in saying this he is only echoing the teaching of S. Ignatius. In S. Cyprian the idea of succession from the Apostles finds its full expression—that great principle which secures the continuity of every baptized Christian community. But S. Cyprian was teaching nothing new.

"Our Lord, whose precepts and admonitions we ought to observe, describing the honour of a bishop and the order of His Church, speaks in the Gospel, and says to Peter, 'I say unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock will I build my Church,' etc. Thence through the changes of times and successions, the ordering of bishops and the plan of the Church flow onward; so that the Church is founded upon the bishops, and every act of the Church is controlled by these same rulers." [2]

Cyprian, in his Treatise on the Unity of the Church, warns the believer against the subtle forms in which evil disguises itself. The power of evil, finding his shrine forsaken by the Christian multitude, attempts a new fraud. He would secure the incautious through sects which assume the Christian name. He has invented heresies and schisms to falsify what is true and divide what should be inseparable. He draws men out of the Church, transforming himself into an angel of light.

[1] Ep. 66. [2] Ep. 26.

Cyprian then proceeds to explain the great doctrine of the Church's unity. He points out that the Lord (1) gave an equal power to *all* the Apostles—"Assuredly the rest of the Apostles were also the same as was Peter, endowed with a like partnership both of honour and power"—(2) but, in order to enforce the need of unity, our Lord first gave the promise to *one* Apostle alone. (3) From these facts follows the Catholic principle that the Church's external bond of unity is the Episcopate. The Episcopate is one; every separate bishop holds a share in the joint property of the Episcopate. It is through the Episcopate that the Church is one, although extended into a multitude of local Churches. The rays of the sun are many, but the light is one. The branches of a tree are numerous, but all spring from one root. The streams of a fountain may be diffused abroad, but unity is preserved in the source. Separate a ray of light from the body, it perishes. Break a branch from the tree, it dies. Cut off the stream from its fountain, and it dries up. Thus the Church is world-wide yet undivided. (4) Hence the practical duty of the individual believer is most clear. He must be in union with the Episcopate. Does he who does not hold this unity of the Church think that he holds the Faith? Does he who strives against and resists the Church trust that he is in the Church? He who gathers elsewhere than in the Church, scatters. S. Cyprian describes this as the Sacrament of Unity.

The attitude which men adopt towards division is to his mind a test of character. Experience of the schismatic temper in his own Church led him to the conviction that

it is not the good who leave the Church. It is the chaff that is drifted in the wind, the feeble tree which is uprooted in the storm. He echoes the language of S. John, "They went forth from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would no doubt have continued with us." [1]

The fundamental thought in Cyprian's doctrine of the Church is that the Episcopate is Divinely founded to be the Sacrament of Unity, while all other organizations of the Church are purely human. "These are they who of their own accord, without any Divine arrangement, set themselves to preside among the daring strangers assembled, who appoint themselves prelates without any law of ordination, who assume to themselves the name of bishop, although no one gives them the Episcopate." [2]

That all other constitutions of the Church except the Episcopal are purely human is a doctrine upon which Cyprian insists—rebuking those who, "despising God's tradition, bring in teachings of human appointment." [3]

In still severer terms Cyprian rebukes the sin of schism. "Such a one is perverted, and sins, and is condemned of his own self. Does he think that he has Christ who acts in opposition to Christ's priests, who separates himself from the company of His clergy and people? He bears arms against the Church, he contends against God's appointment." [4]

Already in the age of Cyprian the schismatic temper laboured to justify itself in the language of Scripture. Was is not written that "where two or three are gathered together in My Name, there am I in the midst of them"?

[1] 1 S. John ii. 19. [2] § 10. [3] § 19. [4] § 17.

From which it was inferred that membership of the visible Church was indifferent. Cyprian's reply is that if the context of the words were quoted, the real drift of the passage would be clear. For our Lord, urging peace and unanimity upon His disciples, said, "If two of you shall agree on earth as touching anything that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of My Father which is in Heaven. For where two or three are gathered together in My Name, there am I in the midst of them." What our Lord, then, teaches is, first agreement, then petition. It is the unanimity of those who pray which secures attention to their demands. But how can men be said to agree who do not agree with the body of the Church itself, the Universal brotherhood? How can two or three be gathered together in Christ's Name if they are separated from Christ's Church? The promise refers to men within the Church, not to those who are self-excluded. Our Lord does not make division a thing indifferent, nor make His Church of so small account as to give the same things without as within.

God is one, and Christ is one, and His Church is one, and the Faith is one, and the people are joined into a solid unity of body by the cement of concord. The real cause of disunion is to be found in the selfishness of the age—selfishness which has destroyed the vigour of faith, moral enthusiasm, and earnest labour—and fear of the unseen and the future. Division is a sign of degeneracy; it is the unspirituality born of selfishness.

"This," says Archbishop Benson, "was penetrating doctrine. It went to the heart of things. Which of the Churches will master it earliest?

"The suitableness of the whole argument to the crisis, and its effectiveness, need no illustration. Again and again its persuasions and its warnings have availed with spirits nobler than the noblest which have agonized themselves into separations—yes, and in hours of greater temptation than theirs."[1]

IV.—*Cyprian's Fourth Trial.*

S. Cyprian was reserved for a fourth trial, for Carthage was afflicted by an awful visitation of the plague. Without warning, the terrible sickness that destroyeth in the noonday, the pestilence that walketh in darkness, crept upon the city, involving persecutor and persecuted alike in one common death. In a few hours men were corpses. The awful calamity drew out into strong relief the best and the worst aspects of human nature. In the panic the claims of friendship, love, and dependency, the helplessness of childhood, the sense of humanity, were forgotten. Affection yielded to the cruelty of selfish fear. They cast out the dying into the streets, they neglected the burial of the dead. They illustrated the maxim, "Every one for himself." The shuddering survivors fled. Heartlessness more horrible than plague left its traces everywhere; and the streets were strewn with corrupted and corrupting bodies.

Meanwhile, Cyprian, a true bishop, urged upon his flock the Beatitude of Mercy. Love must extend beyond the limits of the Catholic fold, for there was nothing exceptional in loving our kindred and our flesh. But for the

[1] Benson, "Cyprian," pp. 185, 186.

persecuted to love their persecutors and requite evil with good would indeed be Christlike.

And so, impelled by grace of charity, the scarred victims of persecution tended the sick-beds of their persecutors, soothed their sufferings, kept some of them alive, and buried the dead. A witness, this, for Christianity more powerful than many irrefutable arguments and volumes of apologies—to those, at any rate, who act upon the maxim "By their fruits ye shall know them."

But the pestilence involved the believing mind in a host of perplexities. The believer was disturbed by the fact that Christian and heathen alike were indiscriminately attacked by its visitations. To relieve their difficulties S. Cyprian wrote his treatise on the Mortality. "We did not become Christians," he replies, "to escape the physical ills of life." This share of life's calamities is involved in the solidarity of the race. What is there in this world which is not common to us with others, so long as this flesh of ours remains? Unproductive harvests, invasions, shipwrecks, make no distinction between disciples and opponents of Christ. The Christian, indeed, should know that he must suffer in the world still more than others. Was it not written, "If thou come to serve the Lord, prepare thy soul for temptation"?[1] The difference between the faithful and the unbelieving is not so much in their trials as in their way of bearing them. Such trials purify the Church and test the individual's virtues—whether the healthy will tend the sick, whether relatives love each other. They identify master and servant in a common compassion or alienate by selfishness.

[1] Ecclus. ii. 1.

What insight we gain into the spirit of that age by reading that some were saddened because the pestilence removed their hopes of martyrdom! "Martyrdom," replied Cyprian, "is not in your power, but in the decision of God. You cannot say that you have lost what you do not know whether you deserved to receive. It is one thing for the spirit to be wanting in martyrdom, it is another for martyrdom to have been wanting to the spirit. What the Lord finds you when He calls you, such will He judge you."

Such labours of Christian charity could hardly fail greatly to influence the pagan mind in a Christian direction. Perhaps it was for this very reason that the pagan authorities rewarded Cyprian with banishment.

V.—*Cyprian's Error.*

Cyprian's peculiar theory of Baptism, which comes to light in his Treatise on the Unity of the Church, became a subject of bitter controversy between the Church at Carthage and the Church at Rome. The question, "Can true Baptism be found beyond the visible communion of the Church?" Cyprian answered unhesitatingly in the negative. His fervid, eager mind took up one aspect of the subject in a quite disproportionate way. Whether partly due to African temperament, or personal experience of the profound blessedness of Baptism in the Church, or to a certain exclusiveness in African Christianity, as has been thought, Cyprian advocated his theory with precipitate vehemence and passion. It is the one great error in a noble mind.

In his anxiety to differentiate the Divine foundation from

human sects Cyprian denied to the latter the power even to baptize. And certainly some of his arguments possessed considerable plausibility. "Out of the Church," he argued, "none can baptize. How can they give what they do not themselves possess? How can he cleanse who is himself unclean? or, if the schismatic can give baptismal grace, why cannot he also give the Holy Ghost?"

In this theory of Baptism Cyprian carried a large number of African bishops with him. He then communicated their decision to Rome, trusting, as he said, that their conclusions, being both right and orthodox, would commend themselves to the Roman Bishop's soundness in the Faith;[1] adding, at the same time, that should they differ, yet both could retain their opinion without sacrificing unity and peace, every bishop having full right to administer the affairs of his own Church according to his own judgment.

This language of Cyprian of Carthage to Stephen of Rome remarkably illustrates his doctrine of the Church, and shows how far he was from recognition of Roman supremacy in matters of faith, to say nothing of the infallibility of that See.

To this theory and procedure of Cyprian Stephen was vehemently opposed. Cyprian's impression was that Stephen judged the Baptism of all heretics to be just and lawful, while Stephen thought that the Bishop of Carthage was departing from the old tradition, and that those who so departed ought to be excommunicated.[2]

Cyprian was discouraged and disgusted. Words, caustic or indignant, flowed in the bitterness of the moment. "Does he give glory to God," asked Cyprian, "who, a friend of

[1] Ep. 72. [2] Ep. 73.

heretics and an enemy to Christians, thinks that the priests of God, who support God's truth and the unity of the Church, are to be excommunicated?" It was exceedingly hard for this noble-minded champion of the unity of the Church to be treated as Stephen treated him. But it was also hard for Stephen to be deserted by so important an influence as the great Bishop of Carthage.

Very severe things were said on either side, and neither issues from the conflict without loss of dignity. It is proverbially difficult to portion praise and blame in such complexities, but it is certainly not just to put the blame entirely on either side. Both were earnest men, both advocated religious truth, each was strongly convinced that he held a true tradition; and both exhibited the infirmities of human nature in the service of the Faith. Stephen was not wise when he threatened to separate himself from Cyprian's communion. Cyprian was not wise when he declared his brother bishop a friend of heretics and an enemy of Christians.

But in both cases it was the very earnestness of their high-minded zeal for truth and their profound sense of its importance which led to these infirmities. Stephen's contention was right and Cyprian's wrong; but both lived and died in the same communion, and their errors of temper or judgment are lost in the fervour of their faith, and the consent of the Church regards them both as saints.

But in principle Stephen had grasped the truth, and Cyprian was mistaken; and the Church has assented to the principle maintained by the Roman bishop, and rejected the teaching of the Bishop of Carthage on this point. The Universal Church is not submitted to, but

corrects, the doctrinal peculiarities of her greatest teachers and saints. But the Church did not assent to the principle because it came from Rome, but because it was Catholic. The principle maintained by Cyprian involved, although the bishop failed to realize this, the dangerous mistake of placing the efficacy of the Sacrament in the minister, and not in the act of Christ.

VI.—*The Martyrdom*, A.D. 258.

Cyprian's year of exile terminated abruptly in a summons from the pro-consul to return to his gardens at Carthage, and to consider himself a prisoner there. This was exactly as Cyprian desired, for he was determined, if it lay within his control, to die in the midst of his people. There in his gardens, repurchased for him by affectionate friends, Cyprian awaited in calm and dignity the moment of his arrest. For his friends it was a period of deepest anxiety. Many eminent persons visited him, urging the duty of concealment until the storm was over. But Cyprian felt that the reasons which prompted withdrawal upon earlier occasions were no longer valid, and that the time for concealment was over. Accordingly, he resisted their loving entreaties, and waited at his post deliberately for the result.

At length the suspense was ended. One morning soldiers appeared at the bishop's door, placed him in a chariot, and drove him quietly away—so quietly, indeed, that he was gone before his people knew. Not that secrecy formed any part of the pro-consul's intention; on the contrary, he summoned the entire city to the trial, meaning to make

the judgment upon Cyprian a warning to all the rest. The trial was, however, still further delayed by the pro-consul's ill health. All through that last night of suspense the faithful watched in the streets outside the residence where Cyprian was imprisoned, determined that, at least, nothing should be done to their beloved bishop without their knowledge.

From his prison, thoughtful for others' well-being, Cyprian sent a message that the maidens watching in the street that night should be guarded with care. The morning came. Cyprian was summoned to the pro-consul's presence. Considering that the issue was life or death, the case was disposed of with business-like expedition.

"You are Thasius Cyprian?" said the pro-consul, Galerius.

Cyprian replied, "I am."

Galerius continued, "You have allowed yourself to be pope to people of sacrilegious mind?"

Cyprian admitted the accusation.

"The most sacred Emperors," replied the pro-consul, "have ordered you to offer sacrifice."

"I will not offer," answered the bishop.

"Be advised for your own safety."

Cyprian answered, "Fulfil your orders. In a cause so righteous there is no reason for delay."

The pro-consul turned to his advisers. After a brief consultation he addressed the prisoner with an evident reluctance, which his ill health increased, but in terms of severity.

"You have long lived with sacrilegious intention; you have associated with yourself many others in a criminal

mutiny, and have shown yourself an enemy to the Roman gods and the sacred observances; nor have the pious and revered princes, the most august Valerian and Galien, and the most noble Cæsar Valerian, availed to recall you to obedience to their religious observances. And therefore, being convicted as the promoter and standard-bearer of most disgraceful practices, you yourself shall be a warning to those whom you have associated with you in evil. In your blood shall order be enforced." With these words the pro-consul took up his tablets and read the sentence: "Our pleasure is that Cyprian die by the sword."

From the believing crowd which pressed into the pro-consul's court there rose a subdued murmur—"Let us also go, that we may be beheaded with him."

Dense masses of people, Christian and pagan alike, for Cyprian was respected beyond the precincts of the Faith, occupied the ground of execution. And since in the level space to catch a glimpse of the martyr became impossible, they climbed up into the trees, and the branches became laden with human beings, and human faces peered out to see the last of the baptism of blood.

There he stood, great, noble-minded, fearless, a veritable chieftain of the Faith, to crown by a noble death the witness of a noble life, to be sacrificed for the Truth's sake, to leave a martyr example long productive of good in the African—nay, in the world-wide Church.

No last words, no dying speech was spoken. He offered himself in a silence more effective than words. The persuasive lips had spoken their last messages to the Church. He did not feel himself called to deliver any special

utterance now. Perhaps in view of the passionate African temperament, already strained well-nigh beyond endurance at the sight, his silence was preventive of fanatical and ill-considered zeal on the part of the people.

The bishop bound his own eyes, and waited the fatal stroke. But the executioner faltered. The evident sympathy of the people, the calm sublimity of the aged bishop, unnerved him: his trembling hand delayed the stroke. To put an end to the dangerous suspense, the centurion in command himself seized the sword, and so Cyprian died—died in the place of his prayers and aspirations, the city of his labours, and before the face of his flock.

The pathetic concluding words of Pontius the Deacon, Cyprian's companion in captivity and eye-witness of his martyrdom, seem still the most fitting sequel.

"What shall I do now? Between joy at his martyrdom and grief at my own remaining here, my mind is rent in twain. Shall I grieve that I did not share his death? Still I must rejoice in his victory. Shall I rejoice in his victory? Still I grieve that I did not share his death. It had been my hope, as you know, to share his martyrdom. I rejoice indeed in his glory; but still more do I lament that I am left behind."

Words like these might afterwards become conventional; they are here marked by evident sincerity. And they open out depths into the Christian spirit which animated the believers in those days.

A hundred and fifty years after Cyprian died, the greatest uninspired teacher in Christendom was preaching in the Church at Carthage on S. Cyprian's Day. The

praise of the martyr, exclaimed Augustine, is the praise of God. Whose honour is that of Cyprian the convert, except His to Whom it was said, "Turn us again, Thou God of hosts"?[1] Whose work is Cyprian the doctor, except His to Whom it was said, "Teach me Thy statutes"?[2] Whose work is Cyprian the pastor, except His Who said, "I will give you pastors according to Mine heart, which shall feed you with knowledge and understanding"?[3] Whose work is Cyprian the confessor, except His Who said, "I will give you a mouth and wisdom, which all your adversaries shall not be able to gainsay nor resist"?[4] Whose work is Cyprian, the endurer of all that persecution for the truth's sake, except His of Whom it was said, "He truly is my Strength"?[5] Finally, whose work is Cyprian, conqueror in all things, except His of Whom it was said, "In all things we are more than conquerors through Him that loved us"?[6]

Thus we do not omit the praises of God when we praise the works of God and the conflicts of God, in the person of a soldier of God.[7]

[1] Ps. lxxx. 7. [2] Ps. cxix. 135. [3] Jer. iii. 15.
[4] S. Luke xxi. 15. [5] Ps. lxii. 6. [6] Rom. viii. 37.
[7] S. Augustine, Sermon 313, p. 1854.

September 30

S. Jerome

JEROME was born about A.D. 346 in the town of Stridon, on the edge of Pannonia and Dalmatia, in a rude, barbaric population.[1] His parents were wealthy Christians, and sent him to study in Rome, where he gathered a considerable library, including many manuscript copies made by his own hands; but his residence in Rome was not free from the vices with which the whole social life was infected. With a view to remove him from these perils, his father sent him to Treves, most probably to be engaged in the imperial service. But occupations of that order were little to Jerome's taste. He left, was baptized at Rome, and retreated to monastic seclusion in Dalmatia; but speedily becoming dissatisfied with his surroundings, he resolved upon a pilgrimage to the East, and settled at Antioch, at that time the scene of a miserable disunion among Catholics. Meletius, the bishop, was banished by the Arian Emperor Constantius, and during his exile the Roman legate Lucifer of Cagliari consecrated a successor, Paulinus, although the see was not vacant.[2] Then Meletius

[1] "Apology," i. 30.

[2] Thierry, i. 56.

returned, and was supported by the Oriental Church. But Paulinus refused to yield, and was supported by the West. Thus Jerome and his companions found themselves at Antioch under Paulinus, whom the Eastern Church regarded as a schismatic.

From Antioch Jerome travelled through the monastic establishments of the desert—those famous austere communities and solitaries described in the pages of Palladius and Cassian. For this life Jerome was not prepared. The fasts, and the severe climate, reduced him to a state of fever and enfeeblement. The appalling contrast with his life at Rome brought on him severe inner struggles. Burnt up by the fierce rays of the sun, he became as swarthy as an Ethiopian. Images of the past, the luxury of Rome, its gratifications, its intoxicating pleasures, rose up, tormenting the mind that longed to escape from them.

From all these illusions Jerome sought refuge in study. He learned Hebrew from a converted Jew; but, after the refined elegance of the pagan classics, its rude simplicity revolted him.

"Unhappy that I was," he exclaims, "I fasted, but I read Cicero." In an attack of fever he dreamed that the last day had come, and that he stood before the Judge. Asked what was his creed, he replied, "I am a Christian." "Thou liest," was the answer, "thou art a Ciceronian, not a Christian; for where thy treasure is, there will thy heart be also." Jerome was beaten, but spared a severer penalty on account of his youth, and on condition that he would never read pagan books again. Jerome viewed this incident diversely at different dates in his career; at one

time with much solemnity, at another as the outcome of delirium.

The troubles of Antioch penetrated even into the monastic abodes of peace. The solitudes of the desert were filled with furious excitement on the claims of Meletius and Paulinus. Monks assailed Jerome's cell with eager inquiries, "Are you for Meletius or Paulinus?"[1] Jerome refused to take either side. He belonged to the Roman Church.[2] This refusal to take sides in the quarrel was fiercely resented. They called him a hĕretic and pagan; they robbed him of his possessions; they did not even leave him writing material. He was forced to depart. "Better to live among wild beasts than among Christians of this sort," cried his companions. Jerome only waited for the severity of winter to pass; and when spring broke he departed from this inhospitable abode of strife, and took refuge in Antioch.[3] Bishop Paulinus, of Antioch, insisted on ordaining Jerome to the priesthood; but Jerome soon left Antioch, and spent three years in Constantinople.

Once more Jerome appeared in Rome. The low level of Roman social life, not only among the pagan section, but also among a large portion of the laity and clergy of the Church, led necessarily to a strong reaction in favour of purer and loftier ideals on the part of the more earnest section of the Church. Some of the wealthiest and most distinguished women in Rome had united themselves in a half-monastic life of devotion and good deeds in one of the palaces on the Aventine. Here Jerome found much sympathy with his desire to raise the standard of

[1] Thierry, i. 84. [2] Letter 16. [3] Thierry, i. 87.

Roman life. He became their teacher and adviser. Jerome's instructions raised the sarcasm that he preferred instructing women rather than men. He answered that if men would inquire of him about the Scriptures, he would no longer concern himself with instructing women. It must not be supposed, however, that Jerome had no influence with men; an ardent group of companions gathered round him.

In this community of women there was Marcella, Paula and her daughter Eustochium, and Asella.[1] Marcella's learning in Scripture was remarkable, and priests often consulted her on the meaning of difficult passages.[2] Paula was a woman of immense fortune,which she devoted unreservedly to religious work.[3] Eustochium was brought up by Marcella, and while still a young girl, declared her intention of adopting the religious life.

This surrender of life's attractions, this sacrifice of wealth, this concentration upon spiritual realities, scandalized and offended the generality of Roman society; and the relative merits of marriage and celibacy became the common subject of Roman conversation.

Two persons in particular became conspicuous for attacks upon virginity—Helvidius, a layman, and Jovinian, a priest.

The theories of Jovinian were much the ordinary ideals of the natural man, and were in fact derived from other sources than Christianity. Among other things he disparaged the virgin life which S. Paul approved; he saw no spiritual gain in fasting which our Lord assumes that believers will practise; and he denied what the Scripture

[1] Thierry, i. 148. [2] Ibid., i. 149. [3] Ibid., i. 159.

asserts, that, corresponding to individual degrees of merit, there will be different degrees of reward and glory hereafter. These theories it was impossible that the Church, with any regard to Scripture or the Faith, could do anything else than condemn. Accordingly, they were condemned by councils, both at Milan and at Rome.

To these theories S. Jerome, after his manner, replied. Doubtless S. Jerome maintained the Faith, although it cannot be said that all the arguments were valid by which he strove to maintain it. And of course here as elsewhere the Church is not committed to the extreme position of her greatest sons. Undoubtedly in his defence of the monastic ideal Jerome made assertions which the Church would never endorse. But, as he truly pointed out, Jovinian's assertions on the virgin life left no room for the Saviour's words, "He that is able to receive it, let him receive it."[1] "Christ loves virgins more than others," said Jerome, "because they willingly give what was not commanded them." The Virgin Mother was entrusted by the Virgin Lord to the virgin disciple.[2]

Jerome's strong advocacy of the monastic ideal was intensely repugnant to the pagan, and, indeed, the average Christian at Rome. It was said that the Christian religion had invented a dogma against nature. Jerome, therefore, appealed to their own pagan history, and reminded them of the reverence shown by the highest secular authorities and state officials to the Vestal Virgins.

Jovinian's statement about identity of future rewards was a sequel to his inability to see special merit in forms of life which involved special self-denial. And here

[1] Ag. Jovinian, bk. i. 12. [2] Ibid., § 26.

Jerome's victory was complete.[1] He showed that while Jovinian made only two classes hereafter, the good and the bad, the Parable of the Sower told of three degrees of productiveness among the good, some thirty-fold, some sixty, and some a hundred. Moreover, S. Paul said that if any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss; but he himself shall be saved, yet so as by fire. If, then, observed Jerome, the man whose work is burnt and perishes suffers the loss of his labour while he himself is saved, yet so as by fire, plainly the man whose work remains will be saved, but not so as by fire. Consequently there are different degrees of salvation. Moreover, "in Christ shall all be made alive—but every man in his own order." If each is to rise in his own order, it follows that those who rise are of different degrees of merit. Again, "There is one glory of the sun, and another glory of the moon, and another glory of the stars; for one star differeth from another star in glory. So also is the resurrection of the dead." Plainly this does not mean that spiritual men will differ from carnal, but that spiritual will differ from spiritual. The just will shine with the brightness of the sun, and those of the next rank with the splendour of the moon; one will be as Arcturus, another as Orion. The same thing is taught in the words, "He which soweth sparingly shall reap also sparingly; and he which soweth bountifully shall reap also bountifully."[2] Surely he who sows more and he who sows less are both on the right side, yet their harvests differ. In the Parable of the Vineyard, it is true, that for the labourers at whatever hour called the reward is the same, meaning one life, one deliverance;

[1] Ag. Jovinian, bk. ii. [2] 2 Cor. ix. 6.

but this is perfectly compatible with the Parable of the Pounds, where the servant who gained five pounds received five cities, and he who gained ten pounds ten cities. So Jerome refuted his opponent.

But Jerome was not happy in Rome. Pope Damasus died, and the laxer section came into increasing power. He therefore resolved to leave the Eternal City, and settle in the far East. It was August, 385, when Jerome turned away from Rome. If he had stirred up many enemies, he had also made many friends. Some determined to sail with him for the East, others accompanied him down the Tiber. The priest Vincentius and Jerome's brother, beside a group of monks, went with him, and settled at Bethlehem. A very large number of religious persons took farewell of him. S. Jerome sailed for Cyprus, where Bishop Epiphanius received him. Reaching Antioch, he was found again in communion with Bishop Paulinus. He reached Jerusalem in the severe cold of winter, and so passed on to Bethlehem.[1] "I, too, miserable sinner though I am, have been accounted worthy to kiss the manger in which the Lord cried as a babe, and to pray in the cave in which the Virgin gave birth to the infant Lord. This is my rest, for it is my Lord's native place; here will I dwell, for this spot has my Saviour chosen."[2] Jerome was soon engaged in building a monastery and a hospice at Bethlehem, "so that," as he beautifully said, "if Joseph and Mary chance to come to Bethlehem, they may not fail to find welcome there."[3]

Jerome's glowing descriptions of the Holy Land must

[1] Jerome, "Apology," iii. 22.
[2] Letter 108, § 10.
[3] Letter 67.

have contributed in no small degree to the number of pilgrimages thither.[1] From his cell at Bethlehem he writes to Marcella, declaring that at Jerusalem the first Adam was buried, and the Second Adam washed away the sins of the first. He asserted that as Greek must be learnt in Athens, Latin in Rome, so the education of a Christian was incomplete if he had never visited the Christian Athens. He declared that every man of note in Gaul hastened thither. So did the Briton, although sundered from the Roman world. All nationalities met in Jerusalem. Differing in speech, they own one religion. The labourer at the plough sings Hallelujah! and the vine-dresser his psalms. Yet what is praiseworthy is, not to have been at Jerusalem, but to have lived a good life while there. "The city which we are to praise and to seek is not that which has slain the prophets and shed the blood of Christ, but that which is made glad by the streams of the river, which is set upon a mountain, and so cannot be hid." [2] In saying this he is not contradicting his former assertions, nor condemning his own conduct. It is not for nothing that he, like Abraham, has left his home and people. But he does not presume to limit God's omnipotence or to restrict to a narrow strip of land Him Whom heaven cannot contain. The true worshippers are not necessarily either at Jerusalem or at Gerizim. Access to the courts of heaven is as easy from Britain as it is from Jerusalem, for the Kingdom of God is within us.

About this time Jerome was consulted in a case of conscience in behalf of a lady in Rome, who, although not

[1] Jerome, Letter 46, A.D. 386. [2] Letter 58.

named in the letter, was almost beyond a doubt the wealthy Fabiola. She was divorced from her husband, a man of evil character, and while he was still alive had married another. She was now uneasy in her mind, and applied through a third person to Jerome to know if she could remain in communion with the Church without doing penance for her sin. Jerome replied that the man to whom she was first married, however worthless he might subsequently prove, was yet her husband still, and no further marriage might be made so long as he was alive. The words of Christ were unmistakable, conclusive: "Whosoever shall marry her that is divorced committeth adultery."[1] Whether she has put away her husband or her husband her, the man who marries her is an adulterer.

One of the most pathetic phases in this career is the famous friendship of Jerome and Rufinus. They dwelt together first in Rome and afterwards at Bethlehem. Their friendship was cemented by similar pursuits and similar ideals. If anywhere existed a friendship secure from dissolving influences, it was popularly regarded to exist in the case of Jerome and Rufinus. Yet, after an uninterrupted course of many years, it was turned into the bitterest of alienations. Their convent life at Bethlehem became disfigured by piteous misunderstandings and suspicions. Jerome's vehemence caused frequent discords, only partially healed, and ultimately Rufinus left him. They parted ostensibly as friends, but when Rufinus found himself back in Rome he exerted all his talents to ruin Jerome's reputation for orthodoxy through Jerome's unguarded statements about the teachings of Origen.

[1] Letter 55.

The dispute was at first theological, but in process of time the theological element disappeared, and the whole matter descended to the level of wretched personality and bitter invective.

Rufinus composed a violent attack on Jerome, to which Jerome prepared a violent reply.

Both documents are lamentable. Some took malicious interest in watching the blows inflicted by two religious men upon each other after a friendship of almost thirty years. It was an unedifying sight.

Rufinus pointed out his opponent's infirmities with unquestionable ability,[1] gathered select extracts from Jerome's ridicule of the Roman clergy; published Jerome's letter containing the Ciceronian dream, and showed that, notwithstanding the solemn way in which he told the dream, he still read the classics and taught them; sneered at him for learning Hebrew from a Jew whom he misnames Barabbas, and accuses Jerome of preferring to Christ; accumulates all the expressions of praise bestowed by Jerome on Origen—and here it must be owned that he shows his opponent's exaggerations.[2] Jerome had called Origen a teacher of the Churches second only to the Apostles, and added that imperial Rome consented to his condemnation, not because he was heretical, but because men could not tolerate his eloquence and his learning.[3] Jerome's later language was easily misrepresented when compared with praise apparently so unjustified as this. Jerome's mature estimate of Origen was that while the ability of his teaching must not lead us to embrace his

[1] Rufinus, "Apology," ii.
[2] Ibid., ii. 13.
[3] Ibid., ii. 20.

wrong opinions, the wrongness of his opinions should not cause men to reject the commentaries which he had published on the Holy Scriptures. But if his admirers and detractors are bent on having a tug of war one against the other, and if, observing no moderation, they must either approve his works indiscriminately, or as indiscriminately disapprove them, Jerome himself would choose to be a pious ignoramus rather than a learned blasphemer.[1]

Rufinus also produced some unfortunate references to S. Ambrose, whose literary indebtedness Jerome had contemptuously compared to the ungainly jackdaw decked in borrowed plumes, describing his works as excellent Greek statements murdered in translation, and as destitute of close reasoning and manliness. These excessively ill-natured and unjust remarks certainly deserved Rufinus's question, "Is this the fairness of a Christian?"[2]

But Rufinus's revenge was a terrible example of the power of embitttered feelings. Everything which could be represented in Jerome's disparagement is produced with subtleness and ability. Sarcasm and logic, invective and insinuation, appear and reappear in its successive pages, wielded with merciless determination and masterly skill. Had Jerome been an embodiment of unprincipled ambition, nothing could have been said more forcible and severe, or better calculated to injure the great student's reputation. Even Jerome's famous work of Scripture Revision, his chief claim to the gratitude of posterity, is misrepresented as a claim to know better than the Apostles knew.[3]

Rufinus was far too subtle to send this document openly

[1] Letter 62.

[2] Rufinus, "Apology," ii. 24.

[3] Ibid., ii. 32.

to his former friend, now his bitter enemy. It was produced under the sanction of a powerful personage in Rome, and secretly circulated in Roman social life, and also carried from monastery to monastery, poisoning and prejudicing the minds of its readers everywhere, before Jerome was allowed to see it, or even to hear of its existence. Of course, the news was bound to reach him sooner or later, through one of his many friends. But so carefully was the document guarded that they were unable to do more at first than send him a rough outline. Jerome, therefore, whose indignation may be better imagined than described, began his reply with the serious disadvantage of not having seen his opponent's actual words.[1] Certainly the right was on Jerome's side when he began with the complaint that pamphlets were written against him and forced on every one's notice, and yet coupled with refusal to allow publicity. Rufinus's alteration of the name of Jerome's Jewish teacher Baranina into Barabbas provokes the retort, "that one must be cautious with such a man, and give him a wide berth, otherwise I may find my own name turned in a trice, and without my knowing it, from Jerome to Sardanapalus."[2]

The accusation of having solemnly announced yet subsequently ignored his Ciceronian dream was not so easy for Jerome to refute. And from that day to this he has failed to convince many of his readers. He attributes his power of quotation to the excellence of his memory rather than to any recent perusal of the classical literature. He affects to treat his vision with indifference as only a dream. But he certainly did not treat it with indifference

[1] Jerome, "Apology." [2] Ibid., i. 13.

when he solemnly appealed to it in earlier letters. However, here he scoffs at Rufinus for expecting the fulfilment of a promise given in a dream. To dream of a martyr's crown will not ensure entrance into heaven.

In parts of his "Apology" it is not easy to acquit Jerome of disingenuousness. Rufinus had frankly confessed that on the subject of the origin of the soul he was doubtful whether each soul was a separate creation or transmitted with the body.[1] Jerome himself elsewhere admits a similar uncertainty, but in his reply to Rufinus scorns his opponent for scandalous ignorance of a matter which the Churches of Christ profess to know.[2] That the Churches of Christ did not profess to know is clear from the wariness and hesitation with which Jerome writes on the subject to S. Augustine. A recent historian puts it that Jerome was in the same perplexity as Rufinus, but was less ingenuous in confessing it.[3]

A dispute between two friends, both alike priests, after a friendship of almost a lifetime, and carried on in terms of such acrid vehemence, roused the sorrow and the shame of all good men. Many of Jerome's friends implored him to desist. Chromatius, Bishop of Aquileia, urged Rufinus to keep silence.

But the old lion was thoroughly roused, and Jerome returned again to the strife. The full particulars of Rufinus's attack had come into his possession, and it would have needed for him superhuman effort if, while reading the exasperating insinuations, he had not flown to pen and paper, and dashed into a hasty if able reply. Jerome's

[1] Creationism and Traducianism. [2] "Apology," ii. 10.
[3] Fremantle in Wace, Nicene Library.

keen sense of the inappropriate could not fail to recognize the piteousness of the quarrel. He himself confesses that the sight of two old men engaged like gladiators over a heretic was no edifying spectacle.[1] But he professes himself forced, although reluctant, to continue the strife.

"A friend," said Jerome, "is long sought, hardly found, and with difficulty kept. Love is not to be purchased; affection has no price. The friendship which can cease has never been real."[2] "The friendship which can cease has never been real;" so wrote Jerome, and, strangely enough, to this very Rufinus, his friend, now bitterly estranged. Jerome is himself a proof that his own maxim is incorrect. He did not make sufficient allowance for human infirmity. His friendship with Rufinus had been true. But as Jerome truly said concerning peace—to point out its advantages is one thing, to practise it, another.[3]

The quarrel between Rufinus and Jerome produced a profound and painful impression far and wide. From Africa S. Augustine wrote to the solitary at Bethlehem, distressed beyond measure at the personalities and bitter antagonism in this unhappy incident, wrought out, as it was, to the scandal of Christendom, in the full glare of publicity. Jerome himself, in his own forcible way, could not help comparing this discussion between Churchmen to the amenities of two quarrelling hags.[4] Augustine asked, Where was the friend whom one must not regard as possibly a future foe, if enmity could arise between Rufinus and Jerome—if a friendship wherein

[1] "Apology," iii. 9.
[2] Letter 3.
[3] Letter 82.
[4] "Apology," iii.

men had together for long years drawn in the sweetness of Holy Scripture could be blighted by bitterness and severed by strife? To see men who had abandoned the burdens and distractions of secular life, men who had lived together in the very land where the Redeemer Himself had trod, where He left the sacred legacy of peace—men, moreover, matured in age and devoted to sacred studies, yet engaged in furious conflict, could cause nothing but painful reflection to any thoughtful mind.[1]

This just and dignified rebuke must have been painful to write and humiliating to receive; and it speaks well for Jerome that he certainly did modify his language and write no further Apologies, and paid Augustine the well-merited tribute of unqualified admiration alike of his noble character and his splendid gifts.

Jerome was born a man of strife and contention. Soon after the affair of Rufinus was concluded he was engaged in a second controversy—if, indeed, the squabble may be dignified with so imposing a name.

Among the visitors to Bethlehem was Vigilantius,[2] a priest from Barcelona, who came, at least for a time, probably like many, under the influence of the ascetic and devotional movement whose chief exponent and example was Jerome. Vigilantius was son of a tavern-keeper at Calaguris, an obscure town in Aquitaine. As a youth he seems to have followed his father's trade, but was afterwards taken into the service of the historian Sulpicius Severus, and ultimately ordained. Paulinus, the saintly Bishop of Nola, recommended him to S. Jerome, who took him into the convent at Bethlehem, where he lived no

[1] S. Augustine, Letter 73. [2] See Gennadius, p. 36.

little time. For some unknown reason, whether wearied of the ascetic life, or of his companions, or of his isolation, Vigilantius suddenly expressed an abrupt determination to depart. Accordingly, he left Bethlehem, and returned to his own home. When safely back in Aquitaine, he published the information that Jerome was a friend of Origen's opinions. In course of time this got to Jerome's ear. Jerome wrote an answer, full of sarcasm and severity, declaring that he drew forth from Origen's writings only the good, and left the bad; that to be a competent wine-taster was no proof of power to interpret Holy Scripture, for which quite another sort of training was required; he bids Vigilantius go to school and learn his grammar, have himself instructed in logic and philosophy, and when he has done that he will perhaps have enough sense to hold his tongue; although Jerome fears that good advice is thrown away on Vigilantius, and recalls the proverb, "It is useless to play the harp to a donkey."[1]

Jerome's asperity and contemptuousness were not calculated to deepen in Vigilantius any remaining respect for the ascetic life. But Vigilantius in his recoil from the austerities of Bethlehem included in his disapproval many practices to which the Church was universally committed. In the course of the next ten years after his withdrawal from Jerome's convent, he adopted a series of opinions contrary to the historical development of Catholicity and to the tendencies prevailing in the Church of his age. Among the particulars which Vigilantius resented were included (1) reverence shown to martyr relics, or, as he seems to have termed it, adoration of relics;

[1] Letter 61.

(2) the statement that the saints departed pray for the Church on earth; (3) the symbolical use of lights.

When a work by Vigilantius condemning these matters fell into Jerome's hands, he made a reply which has been termed the most abusive and least reasonable of all his writings.[1] It was written impetuously in hot haste in a single night. It flowed off like a torrent, while the messenger, on his way to Egypt, waited in the convent. It received no thought and no revision, otherwise, perhaps, it had never seen the light. But it is the perilous prerogative of genius that its casual, impulsive utterances are caught up by the crowd beyond recall. Picture, then, the caustic, merciless wit, through a silent night, dictating to his secretary sentences pungent and indignant, full of force and passion, borne up on the rising tide of measureless energy, uncontrolled, bursting bounds, remaining, alas! to this day pathetic witness to the devastating power of turbulent passion when for the moment it gains the mastery. Legend represents Jerome ever accompanied by a lion. Legend is right, only the lion was within. Vigilantius—that is, the Wakeful—becomes to Jerome's merciless imagination Dormitantius the Sleepy, doubtless a personality caricaturing his opponent's infirmities. The sleepy one has arisen, animated by an unclean spirit, to condemn the reverence shown at the martyrs' graves.[2] Vigilantius charged Catholics with adoring dust wrapped up in silk (meaning relics). "Who in the world," replies Jerome, "ever adored a martyr?" The reverence paid to good men was very different from the adoration due to God alone.

On prayer among the departed, Vigilantius's opinion was

[1] Contr. Vigilant. [2] Ibid., § 1.

that so long as we are alive we can pray for one another, but after we die our prayers for others are no longer prevailing. Even the martyrs' prayer for the avenging of their blood has never been permitted to prevail.[1]

Jerome's reply to this strange severance between two sections of the Church, the militant and the expectant, was forcible. If Apostles while on earth and working out their own salvation can pray for others and prevail, still more prevailing must their prayers become when they have won their own reward. Stephen prayed for his murderers here: can he cease to plead for them there? S. Paul says that the entire ship's crew, two hundred and seventy-six souls, were given to him here: now that he is with Christ are his lips sealed for those who believed through him? Then is the live dog Vigilantius better than the dead lion Paul!

As to the use of lights, S. Jerome replies that they were not employed as Vigilantius asserted, while the sun was streaming in, but only at night; although he reminded Vigilantius that throughout the whole Catholic Church candles were lighted whenever the Gospel was read, even if the dawn was reddening the sky, not to scatter the darkness, but as emblematic of joy, expressing in outward symbol what the psalmist expressed in words, "Thy Word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path."

These answers and arguments were interspersed with remarks abusive and contemptuous, which weakened their force and compromised their charity, Jerome appearing to treat his opponent as one with whom reasoning would not prevail.

[1] "Apology," vi. 10.

Vigilantius has the misfortune of being chiefly known to posterity through the medium of his opponent's estimate. But, apart from personalities and bitterness, Jerome's opinion of his incapacity is not Jerome's opinion alone. Another contemporary estimate describes him as a man in whom zeal for religion was coupled with personal ambition, and who, in his eagerness for reputation, presumed beyond his powers.[1] And certainly nothing in his arguments, so far as they survive, suggests that he was anything more than a somewhat shallow advocate of the merely natural ideals as opposed to the spiritual ideals of Christianity.

But while Jerome's arguments exhibit the keen dialectic of a powerful mind, they are often deficient in the sympathy which enables a man to understand his opponent's position. He thunders, he browbeats, he mingles fierceness and scornful superiority with his controversial zeal. His faults are those to which a learned, scholarly mind is easily liable.

A singular feature of fourth-century life was the exodus from Rome to Bethlehem. A strong reaction from utter worldliness and depraved social conditions set in towards the austerest ideals which Christianity could supply. Persons of distinguished family and station in Rome were found voluntarily abdicating their rank and privileges, and consigning themselves to poverty and devotion in the rude neighbourhood of the Syrian village. The convent of women at Bethlehem included among its inmates some once famous in the highest social circles of Rome. Of these none was more remarkable than Paula. Descended from one of the proudest houses in Rome,

[1] Gennadius, § 36.

tracing their ancestry back to the Scipios, and having in their veins, as they delighted to boast, the blood of Agamemnon, the family of Paula occupied one of the grandest palaces of the Imperial city. Paula was the mother of five children, four daughters—Blæsilla, Paulina, Eustochium, and Rufina—and one son, the youngest, Toxotius.[1] On her husband's death, Paula determined to embrace a life of austerity at Bethlehem. To the wonder and admiration of the devout, she separated herself from her children. In one of the most affecting passages that Jerome ever wrote, he describes Paula's departure from her children at Portus.

"At last the sails were set, and the strokes of the rowers carried the vessel into the deep. On the shore the little Toxotius stretched forth his hands in entreaty, while Rufina, now grown up, with silent sobs, besought her mother to wait until she should be married. But still Paula's eyes were dry as she turned them heavenwards; and she overcame her love for her children by her love for God. . . . Yet her heart was rent within her, and she wrestled with her grief, as though she were being forcibly severed from parts of herself. . . . Among the cruel hardships attending prisoners of war in the hands of their enemies, there is none severer than the separation of parents from their children. Though it is against the laws of nature, she endured this trial with unabated faith. . . . She concentrated herself upon Eustochium alone, the partner alike of her vows and of her voyage. Meanwhile the vessel ploughed onwards, and all her fellow passengers looked back to the shore. But she turned away her eyes that

[1] Jerome, Letter 108, transl. in Nicene Library.

she might not see what she could not see without agony."[1]

Such was the woman who came to be the foundress and the superior of a religious society at Bethlehem.

Paula was evidently a strong personality, and her influence in gathering women into community life was great. From many provinces they flowed in to the convents at Bethlehem. Jerome's account describes the general rules and life under Paula's direction. So numerous was the assembly that she divided them into three sections, each with their own superior, having their meals separately, but meeting for worship. The seven canonical hours of prayer were not yet determined, but they observed at Bethlehem six definite times of prayer—dawn, evening, midnight, and the third, sixth, and ninth hours of the day.[2] On the Lord's Day only they assembled in the church. The sisters were clothed alike, learnt some of the Scriptures every day, were expected to know the psalms by memory, and devoted their time to making garments. Paula was shrewd in detecting character. If a sister was quick-tempered, Paula coaxed her; if phlegmatic, Paula rebuked her.

Jerome did not find the mother superior, although nominally under his direction, an easy person to manage. She had a will of her own, and sometimes had her way in spite of him. And Jerome owns she was a little too self-willed. When Paula was ill, the doctors ordered wine as a preventive of further disease. But she stoutly refused to touch it, and Jerome's expostulations—we know he could be forcible sometimes—were spent altogether in vain. Jerome appealed to Bishop Epiphanius, who happened

[1] Letter 108, § 6. [2] Ibid., § 20.

at the time to be his guest. The bishop visited the sick woman, but when Jerome met him coming away from the sick-room and inquired with what success, "Only this," said Epiphanius, "that, old as I am, I have been almost persuaded to drink no more wine myself." Jerome thereupon resigned himself to the inevitable. He strongly disapproved of persons taking upon them burdens beyond their strength. Did not Scripture say, "Burden not thyself above thy power"?[1] But, as Jerome owned, and certainly he knew, it is always difficult for human nature to avoid extremes.[2]

Paula's knowledge of Scripture was remarkable. She studied Hebrew under Jerome, and became able to chant the Psalms in Hebrew in a manner which won Jerome's admiration.[3] But Paula's generosity was indiscriminate and unbounded. Even Jerome himself felt bound to interpose. He warned her of the consequence of reckless liberality. But in this she refused obedience, and protested that her ideal was to die a beggar, to leave her daughter penniless, and to be indebted to strangers for her winding-sheet. And, in fact, she bequeathed to Eustochium a heavy legacy of debt, the burden of a community which she could neither forsake nor provide for. Jerome declares that Paula borrowed money at interest to supply her charities, and contracted new loans to pay off old ones.

Toxotius, whom Paula left at Rome to grow up as best he might, was a heathen and a scoffer at the Christian faith until he fell in love with Seta, the Christian daughter of the pagan pontiff Albinus, and then Toxotius, through devotion to Seta, accepted not only her, but also her

[1] Ecclus. xiii. 2. [2] Letter 108, § 21. [3] Ibid., § 27.

religion. Toxotius's recovery to the Faith was not due to his mother's influence, nor can it justify her leaving him as a child in Rome to the mercy of strangers while seeking her own spiritual training at Bethlehem.

The picture of Albinus is curious. Himself a pontiff of the pagan divinities, his own wife was a Christian, and she had brought up her daughters in her own religion, to which apparently Albinus offered no objection. The old expiring faith, indifferent to its own perpetuity, even in the persons nearest and most beloved, explains the reason why it should expire. Jerome represents Albinus as encircled by Christian voices, a delighted grandfather hearing from the little ones' faltering lips Christ's Alleluia.[1] Seta, brimful of happiness, asked S. Jerome to write her some rules for the little one's bringing up. And Jerome wrote her one of the wisest of his letters, full of kindliness, knowledge, and sympathy.

But clouds were gathering. Before long Paula herself lay dying. Eustochium, an exemplary daughter, had never left her mother for a single night even while she was well, and now that she was ill was more than ever assiduous in her care.

Paula's death was a severe blow to Jerome. His power of work seemed to go from him. Letters came in asking for the completion of literary efforts long in hand; but Jerome still delayed, unable to finish them. Eustochium herself, overwhelmed with grief, conquered her grief to rouse him to further exertions. She asked him to write a memoir of Paula. Jerome struggled for self-mastery. He took his pen—that facile pen of the ready writer—but

[1] Letter 107.

only to find his power had gone. His hand fell powerless; he could not write. At last, by a superhuman effort, he dictated through two nights a panegyric, one of his finest writings, chastened by sorrow and profound emotion, in which, as Jerome with prophetic insight felt, Paula became immortalized.

Barbaric invasions of the West, and the siege of Rome, led many to look for refuge to the distant East; and the convents of Bethlehem became the refuge of Italy, a shelter for fugitives from the violence of the invaders. In the general exodus Bethlehem was beset and besieged by a motley crowd, and the benevolence of Eustochium was frequently deceived. Then came the terrible, incredible news to the East that Rome itself was sacked and ruined. Alaric and his Goths had become its masters. The incompetence of emperors, the jealousy and rivalry of their generals, the weak, effeminate court life, all contributed to the overthrow of that mighty and at one time apparently imperishable empire. The news of the fall of Rome, the death of friends, the torture of some of the noblest, the universal overthrow, appalled S. Jerome. He was dazed, and could scarcely credit its reality. But the news became more and more attested. Then came the melancholy witnesses—ships, thronged with miserable survivors, landing in Palestine inmates of Rome's proud palaces, now reduced to abject need and destitution. All sorts and conditions came to the refuge of Bethlehem, among them the heresiarch Pelagius. Orosius, friend of Augustine, and afterwards historian, also came, and was received by Jerome.

Pelagianism was Jerome's last trouble. His opposition

and refutation stirred up many enemies. One night the convent was attacked by a fierce band under Pelagian leaders, who made war upon the women, drove them out of their houses, and would have burnt the convent itself if the inhabitants of Bethlehem, disturbed by the tumult, had not risen in defence. The Bishop of Jerusalem threw the blame on Jerome, and the Pope himself felt obliged to intervene, rebuking the bishop for his indifference.

The last years of Jerome's life were passed in ever-deepening melancholy. The social wreck, the loss of friends, the decrease of power to work, the advancing infirmities of body, left him in pathetic and piteous loneliness. His thin, weak voice, his attenuated features, wasted with severe study and self-discipline, prophesied the nearness of the end. The old fire and force was abated. No longer could he break out like a lion against opponents and intruders, or compel himself by sheer strength of iron will to merciless and incessant toil. So weak did he become, that he could only raise himself upon the bed by a cord fixed to a beam above; and in that position he joined in devotion or gave directions for the government of the monastery. And so he died on September 30 in the year 420, at the place of our Lord's nativity, his chosen home for four and thirty years.

October 1

S. Remigius

FROM S. Gregory of Tours comes the story of the conversion of Clovis and the Franks.

Clovis had married the Christian princess Clotilda, and while he did not interfere with her religious practices he preferred his own. But the difference in religion quickly made itself felt. She could not be content until he shared her faith. She gently strove to show him the strangeness of the pagan mythology—how the old god Saturn, who, they said, fled from his rebellious son, was no god, but a magnified man; how the stories of pagan divinities, if literally repeated in human life, would mean no less than repudiation of the simplest precepts of morality. And in grand and solemn contrast with all these she pointed her husband to the Catholic idea of God. Clovis was not influenced by her persuasion, except so far as to place no obstacle in the way of the baptism of their first-born Ingomer. The church was gorgeously arrayed for the baptism of the son of Clovis, but the king was still untouched. Within the week after his baptism, the child, still wearing his white baptismal robe, was taken ill and died.

Clovis retorted upon the weeping mother, "See what comes of your religion! If the child had been dedicated to my gods he would have lived, but since you had him baptized in the name of your God he cannot live." But the poor queen answered in the language of Christian faith, "I know that they who are called away in their white robe from this world are cherished in the Paradise of God."

When her second son Clodomer was born, she fearlessly brought him to the baptismal font. What must have been her horror when she saw this child also fall ill as his brother had done. "He, too, will die," said Clovis, "like his brother, all through the baptism of your Christ!"

Meanwhile Clotilda in agony prayed, and the child recovered. But Clovis stood aloof from his wife's religion. One day, however, in a great battle against the Alemanni, the tide of war turned violently against him, and he felt his forces giving way, and himself being borne down into defeat and ruin and death, and in despair he turned his face towards heaven, and with passionate tears he cried, "O Jesus Christ, whom Clotilda calls the Son of the living God, they call you able to give help to the feeble and victory to those who trust in you, give the victory to me! If I conquer I will be baptized." And Clovis won that fight, and Clotilda heard from his own lips that he owed his victory to the invocation of the name of Christ. Then the queen sent for Remigius, Bishop of Rheims, to instruct the king in the way of life. So Remigius bade him abandon his idols, which could never profit either him or any other man, and to believe in the true God, Maker of earth and heaven. Clovis replied that for himself he readily

accepted the bishop's faith, but that his people, who followed him, would not readily change their gods. He, however, offered to assemble them and himself explain the bishop's words. But the people acquiesced with a readiness which surprised their monarch and should have alarmed their bishop, and without argument replied, "We cast away our mortal gods, O pious king, and are ready to follow the God whom Remigius calls immortal."

So the baptistry was prepared for this memorable occasion. Hung with gorgeous decorations, as imposing and festal as the art of the period could make it, the whole church shone with glittering tapers and was fragrant with sweet odours, so that the simple barbarians could but think these were odours of Paradise—a dignified and necessary appeal to the inner self through the avenues of the senses.

Clovis himself took the lead, and demanded of the bishop to be baptized.

"The new Constantine," says S. Gregory of Tours,[1] "approached the laver wherein the old leprosy was to be done away. And as he drew near, Remigius said, 'Bow thy neck, Sicambrian; worship what thou hast hitherto burned, and burn what thou hast hitherto worshipped.'"

"For holy Remigius," remarks Gregory, "was a singularly able man, and gifted in power of speech, and no less holy than gifted. There is even a book existing which says that he raised the dead." Three thousand of Clovis's followers were baptized that day.[2]

Clovis at the time of his conversion was the only Christian king in Europe. Hence the proud title of the French monarchy—eldest son of the Church. It was a

[1] Bk. II. ch. xxxi. p. 226. [2] Ibid., p. 227.

title of which the French were justly proud. Far down in the seventeenth century it was claimed that no occupant of the French throne had ever accepted any other faith than that of the Catholic Church. And certainly there were not many kingdoms which could have said the same. But the eldest son of the Church did as yet but imperfectly and dimly realize the true nature of the Faith which he embraced. When he heard from Remigius the story of the Redemptive Passion, Clovis was moved, but it was not to tenderness. The personal lesson, the call to penitence, the demand of love, these were not the ideas upon which Clovis seized. He was filled with indignation. "Had I been there with my Franks," exclaimed the king, "they dared not have done it!"[1]

The Baptism of the three thousand is an instance of the methods of conversion prevalent in those days. The rapidity with which crowds followed their leaders from one religion to another, as they would from one engagement to another, is very startling. The writers of these records, the missionaries in such events, may have been influenced by reminiscences of the first Whitsuntide, "when the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls."[2] But the antecedents of the converts in Jerusalem and of the converts at Paris were as widely different as well could be. In the one case they were devout Jews, in the other case ignorant barbarians. A considerable probation, a careful instruction, were essential in dealing with the barbaric Franks; otherwise the danger of moral failure, of total apostasy, thereby hindering, perhaps preventing altogether, the conversion

[1] Gregory of Tours, p. 586. [2] Acts ii. 41.

of others, was extremely serious. Of such careful and individual instruction and sifting there seems, however, to be little or no trace. Men like the hearers of S. Peter's first sermon were already trained and disciplined by knowledge of the Mosaic Law, were heirs to a national character chastened through centuries of real religion, and were, no doubt, many of them, men of deep personal piety, of a refined and lofty type. That could scarcely be the case with the rough Frankish warriors, not yet disciplined by the elements of civilization, adherents of pagan religions and barbaric ideas. These men naturally, inevitably, brought into the Catholic Church the practices of their heathen fathers. Thus we find the most desperate confusions—nominal Christianity, moments of impulsive devotion followed by deeds of wild brutality and outbursts of the most hideous passions. The ascendency of Christianity over the mind of the rude warrior and his associates was in reality only begun. The celebrated words of Remigius, "Sicambrian, burn what thou hast hitherto worshipped, and worship what thou hast hitherto burned," were truly significant of the entire revolution of heart and character necessary before one of these rude chieftains could in any really deep sense become a disciple of Jesus Christ. It is easy to criticize the incompleteness of Clovis's adherence to Christianity, to point out the inconsistencies of his subsequent life; but at any rate the beginning of the Christian influence was there.

Unfortunately, the influence of the Church was not the only influence which affected the simple-minded Franks; they encountered among the population in Gaul the vices of a decaying civilization. The old Roman

influence, sceptical, luxurious, unprincipled, degrading, met this youthful race on every side. And in Gaul, as often, the conquered gave rules to their conquerors. The simpler life, the nobler character of the rough but brave and manly Frank were dissipated and corrupted by contact with the weak and feeble relics of cultured Roman life. Hence that strange mixture, the barbarism of the savage and the corruption of the civilized. How often has the superior knowledge of an older race perverted the simplicity of newer peoples!

It must not be supposed that the conversion of the three thousand really meant the conversion of the kingdom of the Franks. This was a gradual process, and, indeed, was very slow.

One of the great obstacles in converting the barbaric hordes to the Church was that in many cases they became the prey of Arianism. The Franks are an exception. But the Goths were made Arians, so were the Vandals in Africa.[1] Hence the work of S. Remigius was of enormous moment to the propagation of the Faith. By the conversion of the Franks he placed among the barbaric conquerors of the Roman Empire a people uncontaminated by heresy, a bulwark against error, and in the strength and ascendency of the Frankish nation there was secured the ascendency of the Catholic religion.

[1] Cf. Montalembert, ii. 246.

October 6

S. Faith

THE certain records of S. Faith are quickly told. She was born in the town of Agen, in the province of Aquitaine. She was but a girl at the time when she became a martyr, and gave up her life before she had entered upon its full possession. The magistrate who presided and condemned was Dacian; the period was the reign of Diocletian, probably close upon the year 300.

The acts of her martyrdom are singularly brief, and are regarded by the learned as very ancient and worthy of trust. They describe how S. Faith, being arrested and brought before Dacian, declared herself a Christian, and was chained down upon a brazen frame, and fire applied to her. Some among the bystanders were so deeply affected by the horrible sight that they publicly protested against Dacian's decision; and they, too, suffered with S. Faith, being offered the alternative of sacrifice or death, and on refusal to apostatize were beheaded. Thus S. Faith went into the other life not unattended.

October 9

S. Denys

AT least two of the saints are known to have borne the name of Denys.

1. The earlier of this name is the Dionysius—one of S. Paul's converts at Athens—mentioned in the Acts of the Apostles. Nothing is really known of him beyond the statement there given.

2. The later saint, who is the one commemorated in the Calendar, is said to have been sent from Rome about A.D. 250 to preach the gospel in Gaul. His mission would begin about the same time as that of S. Crispin.[1] While Crispin settled at Soissons, Denys made his head-quarters at Paris. All that seems certain beyond this is that S. Denys was bishop, and that he became a martyr.

Legends clustered round the name of Denys. The strange story, how Denys, after being beheaded, took up his head and walked two miles holding it in his hands, still finds a place to this day in the Roman Breviary. When the tendency is to dwell much on the defects of the Anglican Prayer-book, it is necessary to be reminded that there are defects from which the English Church is free.

[1] See October 25

Learned men tell us that the biographies of the two saints were blended together into one narrative about the middle of the eighth century.[1] This confusion was a lamentable achievement, involving no little violence to fact, as the persons thereby identified lived some two hundred years apart. But the confusion, being once boldly made, became congenial to national sentiment, for it made the Apostle of France a distinguished convert of S. Paul, and it asserted that there was a Bishop of Paris in the Apostolic age.

To challenge the identity of the two S. Denys was an act which, in the twelfth century, required no little courage, as Abelard found, to his cost.

Abelard, brilliant but erratic, was for a time an inmate of the great monastery of S. Denys in Paris, where he made himself singularly unpopular by assuring the monks that S. Denys, their founder, was not the Areopagite whom S. Paul converted at Athens. Abelard was historically correct, but ill advised. The Convent of S. Denys at Paris in the twelfth century was, of all places, not the one to select in which to correct the mistaken identities of their patron saint. Moreover, Abelard's controversial and aggressive way made still more difficult a lesson in history which would have been unpalatable if given by the most conciliatory of men. He seems to have taken a malicious delight in maintaining from the standpoint of superior knowledge a position which his opponents were too ignorant to answer and too prejudiced not to resent. Abelard found that he had raised a perfect storm of indignation, and that his only escape lay in departure from the

[1] Bollandists, "Acta Sanctorum."

precincts of S. Denys.[1] But the learned writers of the Acts of the Saints have endorsed Abelard's opinion, and the distinction between the convert of the Areopagus and the bishop of Paris seems likely to remain an accepted commonplace in modern hagiology.

S. Denys is for France what S. George is for England, only upon far more substantial grounds. For S. Denys is a national saint, an apostle to the Gallican people.

[1] See "Life of S. Bernard."

October 13

Translation of King Edward

"I will go into Thine House with burnt-offerings:
And will pay Thee my vows,
Which I promised with my lips,
And spake with my mouth,
When I was in trouble."—Ps. lxvi. 12.

EDWARD was son of King Ethelred and Emma his queen. "A graceful pair were they, as sapphire and sparkling gold, or the lily and full-blown rose."[1] But when Ethelred died, and Emma married Canute, there was no room in England for the sons of Ethelred. The woman's tender care ceased towards the children of her former marriage: she had thrown in her lot, and she gave all her affection elsewhere. Far off in Normandy dwelt Edward for protection. He was trained in Norman ways and Norman tongue, not in the ways of England, where his father had reigned as king.

Edward's emotions during these days of solitude and insecurity, and his famous vow, are described for us in the verses of his Norman-French biographer.

"Edward stays beyond the sea,
Grieving, pensive, sad, is he.
Safe at ease he cannot be,
Safe he dwells not any hour,
In chamber, castle, or in tower. . . .
As the incense through the air
Heavenward rose his earnest prayer:

[1] Norman-French "Life of Edward," p. 183.

'Thou Who didst from nought create,
Throning stars in high estate,
Setting sun and earth in place,
Gav'st the moon its wondrous grace;
Thou Whom things created sing,
Truly Thou alone art King;—
See, Sweet God, the fatherless;
Jesu, pity my distress.
Where, enthroned o'er all the lands,
Rome, the Eternal City, stands—
Rome, where rest the saintly dead,
Rome, where martyr blood was shed,—
There will I Thy shrines before
Bow and worship and adore,
If my Lord my shield will be
Through these days of misery.'" [1]

Edward's vow was no careless utterance, born of trouble, forgotten in prosperity. Authority permitted him to change the form in which he kept it; but keep it he did, and that right royally, for the majestic Abbey of Westminster is the memorial of Edward's vow.

Great changes came after Edward's prayer. The clouds broke up and passed away. The throne of England was vacant once again, and all the people longed to have Edward there. But Edward was no victim of earthly ambition. Although the way to the throne lay open for him alike by claim of inheritance and by will of the people, yet probably no man ever accepted with sincerer reluctance the responsibilities of a kingdom. It needed all Earl Godwin's persuasiveness before Edward could be induced to assume the cares and burdens of the English crown. The earl insisted that it was better to live gloriously on a throne than to die ingloriously in exile; that Edward, being son of Ethelred and nephew of Edgar, was the natural

[1] Norman-French "Life of Edward," pp. 199, 200.

heir to the kingdom; that it was offered to him in mature age, ripened by experience and knowledge how to rule, schooled in adversity to sympathize with misfortune.[1]

Edward's coronation was held at Winchester on Easter Day, 1043. Archbishop Eadsine, his consecrator, availed himself of the opportunity to counsel the newly crowned monarch and instruct him before all the people in the art of government.[2] The devout king received the archbishop's counsels with reverence, treasured them in his memory, and obeyed them in his practice.

But the Saxon nobles could not be content with an unmarried king. For the succession of the kingdom they entreated him to marry. Edward's marriage with Edith, daughter of Earl Godwin, wakens mingled feelings in the poet biographer, divided as he is between hatred of the earl and admiration for the daughter—[3]

> "As comes the rose from the thorn
> Came Edith from Godwin."

He says that she had excellent taste in literature and in anything to which she paid attention—that for work in embroidery she had no equal as far as Constantinople.

It was said that Edward and Edith lived together as brother and sister, rather than as husband and wife.

Edward's favourite pursuit was hunting. Once a countryman overthrew the enclosures by which the deer were ensnared. Frustrated in the chase, to which he was passionately devoted, the king's wrath broke out fierce: "By God and His Mother," exclaimed Edward, "I will serve you just such another turn if ever it lies in my power."

Doubtless the outburst is very incongruous alike with

[1] Wm. Malmesbury, "Regum Gesta," II. § 196.
[2] Cf. Wm. Malmesbury, II. xiii. [3] French "Life," p. 212.

the king's position and Christian character. But the impression which it made upon his contemporaries seems to have been that Edward, even in his wrath, would not avail himself of his kingly power to hurt a man, but put himself on a level of perfect equality with him. And certainly, although the sentiment was unchristian, yet the self-restraint involved in the refusal to injure a man within his power was good.[1]

Edward's impetuousness led to serious alienation between him and his too-powerful father-in-law, Earl Godwin.

Eustace, Earl of Bologne, was on a visit to King Edward at Canterbury. After the interview he passed through Dover, where some of his retainers demanded insolently as a right the hospitality which should have been requested as a privilege or paid for as a bargain. The Englishman retaliated and killed Eustace's servant. Whereupon Eustace gathered his men and fell upon the inhabitants of Dover, and killed nineteen, including the offender. But by this time the whole city had risen, and fell on Eustace, who lost many of his men, and escaped with difficulty.[2]

Back rode Eustace to the king and told his story. The king was furious, and ordered Earl Godwin to proceed against Dover and take vengeance.[3]

But Earl Godwin saw more wisely than the king. He noted that one side only had been heard, and that to proceed against the other unheard would be a gross infringement of justice. Accordingly he flatly refused to lead an attack against the king's own subjects in behalf of foreigners to whom, as Godwin thought, the king

[1] Wm. Malmesbury, II. xiii. This incident is very hardly treated by Freeman.

[2] Wm. Malmesbury, II.

[3] Ibid.

was far too warmly attached. Edward's wrath was now turned upon the earl, and Godwin himself was banished. His family shared the king's displeasure. Even the queen, Godwin's daughter, was separated from her husband. The credit of this oppressive action was ascribed to Robert of Jumièges, Archbishop of Canterbury. But Godwin's exile was brief.[1] Up the Thames sailed Godwin armed, and met the king at London. The old earl, backed up by his reputation and influence, prevailed in the assembly, and recovered his old position. The ascendency of Godwin meant retaliation on the foreign influence through which his banishment had been achieved. Archbishop Robert of Jumièges must now take his turn in exile, never to come back. He did not even wait for any sentence of exile, but, feeling that the popular will was against him and his, fled headlong, appealed to Rome, came back as far as Jumièges, there died and was buried.

But in spite of these unhappy differences, great was the reverence in which his people held their king. There is no one so wise, they said, but he departs wiser from the Court of Edward.[2] Men loved to dwell on his gentle virtues. Poets sang, comparing him to Solomon. French, German, Lombard gathered round King Edward, delighting in his judgment, his wisdom and courtesy.

So Edward was encircled with love and reverence. But in all this prosperity his mind was haunted by the vow of pilgrimage made far away in the Church in Normandy in the days when darkness and fear had settled down upon him. None could foresee the vast change of circumstance which placed an exile on a throne; but could these changes

[1] Wm. Malmesbury, II. [2] French "Life," p. 205.

dispense him from fulfilment of his vow made solemnly with utmost earnestness? Edward felt that he could not dispense himself; nor could he fulfil the vow without his people's permission. The only course was to place the facts before them. The king assembled his barons in London, and told them how in the days when he dwelt in Normandy, there came repeatedly news from England most sorrowful[1]—news of his father's death, news of his mother's remarriage, news of his brother's death—and in the fear and loneliness and anguish of his soul, he gave himself to the protection of God and His saints to order and guide his life, and vowed a solemn pilgrimage to Rome. That pilgrimage, for the discharge of his vow, for the good of his soul, and in obedience to the Scripture teaching as to vows, he now desired to fulfil. Accordingly he entreated his people to put no hindrance in his way. If the Lords and the Commons would keep well together, there was no enemy able to do them hurt. Separated twigs are weak; bound in bundles, none can break them. With this the king commended them to S. Peter, and asked their approval to begin his pilgrimage.

But the barons were dismayed at the king's proposal. It could not possibly be permitted. Let the king remember that he had no heir, that the journey was long and dangerous, that he would be going among a people who sought nothing but gain and gifts—

> "The red gold and the white silver
> They covet as a leech does blood."

Let the king listen to his own people. Let him expend his treasure there at home. Let him build a grand Church

[1] French "Life," p. 219.

in his own land. Let him fill it with people of religion who should have nothing to do but to pray; and who should plead for living and departed, for the souls of kings departed, for kings present and kings to come, for the whole kingdom, its welfare and its peace, offering to God service in mass and matins, fast and discipline.[1] And to secure this change in his vow's fulfilment, let the king send to Rome for the Pope's permission.

Edward obeyed the proposal of his assembled Barons and Commons. Eldred of York and Herman of Winchester brought back the Pope's reply, dispensing the king from his pilgrimage to Rome, and substituting the building of a sanctuary within the limits of his own land.[2]

Then joyfully and with a clear conscience Edward began to build his Church at Westminster, then called Thorney, on the border of the Thames.[3]

Deep were the foundations laid with large square blocks of grey stone.[4] A central tower was built, and two at the west end. The stones were sculptured, the windows storied. There was a cloister with a chapter-house, circular, vaulted with stone; and, close beside, the monastic buildings under the Order of S. Benedict.

Of his majestic abbey church Edward lived to see the dedication. It was Christmas.[5] The king's strength was failing fast, but he summoned all the barons and people to keep with him the dedication at Westminster. Almost disabled by fever, Edward attempted to conceal his suffering, and sat out the feast, unable to partake—a crowned shadow at the festival.

[1] French "Life," p. 222. [2] Ibid., p. 224.
[3] Ibid., p. 236. [4] Ibid., p. 244. [5] Ibid., p. 280.

Richly did the king endow his church with lands and possessions. Costly were the silken vestments with which he presented it. Right royally did he discharge his vow.[1]

The dedication of Westminster Abbey was the fulfilment of Edward's dearest hopes. It was the culminating act and the close of his reign, for he did not long survive it.[2] During the illness of which he died his queen Edith tended him with unflagging devotion, and among his last words he spoke of her goodness and commended her to the charge of his people.

It is probably true that Edward was not great in the sense of being a born ruler of men. He possessed no genius for government or conquest such as that conspicuous in an Alexander or a Napoleon. But it is not gifts of that kind which qualify for the title of saint. He was not so much great as good. He was not so much feared as loved. Although he was Norman by education and by taste and by friendship, and surrounded his Court with Norman personages and appointed Normans to high positions in the Church, yet he won to himself the popular reverence of the Saxon multitude no less than of the Norman few. A man who drew to himself the united love of opposing peoples was assuredly a man possessed of no mean qualities. And it is not difficult to see the secret of Edward's power. It lay in his pure unworldliness.

[1] French "Life," p. 282. [2] Ibid., p. 283.

October 17

S. Etheldreda

THE family of Annas, King of the East Angles, was remarkable for its aspirations towards the monastic life. Of his three daughters, Ethelberga became abbess of the French convent of Farmoutier in Brie;[1] Sexburga became queen of Erconbert, King of Kent, and when he died acted as regent during her son's minority, and then entered a religious house, where she passed the remainder of her days; and Etheldreda—commemorated in the Calendar of the Church—after being twice married became foundress and abbess of the great convent of Ely. The religious ideal of all three sisters, set strongly in the same direction, reveals the influence exerted in their home. Their mother was sister of the famous Abbess Hilda of Whitby.

The story of Etheldreda illustrates remarkably the religious life of her age.

It is quite clear from the entire history that if left free to follow her own religious aspirations she would never have married at all, and that the inconsistencies of her position were partly owing to the way in which for

[1] Wm. of Malmesbury.

political reasons she was coerced into relationships which she would otherwise never have entered.[1] Although her heart was set upon convent life, she became reluctantly, at her father's will, the wife of Tonbert, chief of the fen country, who gave her the Isle of Ely as a wedding gift.[2] Through the two years of their married life Etheldreda retained the monastic ideals, and when Tonbert died she lived for the next five years in the practices of ascetic devotion. But, unhappily for her peace of mind, she was sacrificed to political emergencies. If the heir to the Northumbrian throne were married to one of the royal East Anglian houses the consolidation of the two kingdoms might follow upon the union of the two ruling families. True that the Northumbrian heir was at that time only a lad of fifteen. True also that the widowed princess had a strong aversion to married life. All this was overruled in the supposed interests of the people. She was compelled to marry Egfrid, the future Northumbrian king. But although nominally his wife, she persisted in living as if a member of a community. Egfrid, disgusted with his wife's religion, implored Bishop Wilfrid of York to induce her to abandon her monastic ideals.[3] But Wilfrid's sympathies were entirely on the other side. So far from helping the husband, he supported the wife. And he seems to have acted without the frankness and straightforwardness which Egfrid had a right to expect from the bishop to whom he confided his domestic difficulties.

The consequence was that Etheldreda, after twelve years' residence in Egfrid's house, secured from the king an

[1] Matthew of Westminster. [2] Bright, p. 250. A.D. 652.
[3] Bede, iv. 19.

unwilling consent to her departure, a consent repented as soon as given, and so under these piteous conditions found herself free at last to realize the life which had throughout commanded her sympathies and formed her ideal. She took refuge at once in the convent of Coldingham, where Ebba, the king's aunt, ruled as abbess, and there received the veil at Wilfrid's hands.[1] But the unhappy Egfrid, unable to endure his desolated home, followed after his fugitive wife, determined to reclaim her and to withdraw the consent extorted from him in an hour of weakness. The popular imagination revelled in legend, as it described how Ebba the abbess, unable to protect, aided the royal novice in her flight, and how the queen, in garb of poverty disguised, fled southward until she reached her own far-off domain, the Isle of Ely, and how the waters of the marshy ground themselves arose to be her protection, until the royal pursuer, wearied and discouraged, abandoned her to the solitude which she had chosen.

Egfrid, deprived of his queen, speedily consoled himself in another marriage, to which apparently Wilfrid offered no objection. How the Bishop of York reconciled his share in these incidents with the principle of the indissolubility of Christian marriage and with the laws of the Church there remains no trace to show.

A modern Roman historian says that it is happily certain that no one to-day in the Catholic Church would sanction or approve Wilfrid's conduct in this affair.[2] It is also, he thinks, no less certain that no one seems to have blamed him in the age in which he lived. Whether or no the second of these statements is correct, it should be remembered

[1] A.D. 671. [2] Montalembert, iv. 255.

that when a somewhat similar case was presented to the judgment of S. Columba, the saint threw all the weight of his influence so strongly on the side of domestic love that the man and woman from that time forward lived in accordance with their marriage vows.[1]

Etheldreda certainly found her vocation in the life to which for so many years she had aspired. She became foundress of a great monastic institution on the hill where the cathedral of Ely now stands. Many a woman distinguished in the world followed Etheldreda into devotional seclusion—chief among these was her own sister Sexburga, Queen of Kent. Mothers sent their daughters to Ely to be trained by Etheldreda's influence and example.

In this way she passed the last seven years of her life. Her clothing was of the plainest and roughest kind; except on the greater feasts, she rarely took food more often than once a day; and whenever health allowed spent the hours from midnight to morn in the Church in prayer. Toward the last she suffered from a tumour in the neck, which she regarded as a penance for the costly jewels with which it was formerly laden.

The story of Etheldreda's life is recorded by the Venerable Bede, who heard part of it at least from Bishop Wilfrid's own lips, and was himself so moved by the narrative that he became a poet and wrote a hymn in her honour.

The name of S. Etheldreda became popularly condensed into S. Audrey.

[1] Adamnan's "Columba," ii. 41, reference in Bright.

October 25

S. Crispin

CRISPIN and Crispinian were Roman citizens distinguished for rank about the middle of the third century. They were brothers alike by nature and by grace, having the happiness to share with equal earnestness and intensity of faith the same Divine convictions. They went together from Rome to preach the gospel in Gaul. In order, like S. Paul, to be independent among those for whose conversion they laboured, the two brothers provided for their own necessities by following the trade of shoemakers. Hence this trade has been commonly regarded as under their especial patronage. They settled in the town of Soissons and laboured steadily perhaps some forty years with great effect in winning converts to the Christian Creed. But their marked success could but distinguish them, in the cruel days of Diocletian, for special severity.

They were handed over to Rictius Varus, the magistrate in 286, with express orders to subject them to the most merciless sufferings—an order which was obeyed. The details of their martyrdom are unhappily made uncertain

by the fabulous legends with which a later writer has confused them. Doubtless intending to do them honour, he succeeded in obscuring what was true. But they sealed their apostolic labours with their blood, and their names still survive in dedications in the land for which they gave their lives.

November 6

S. Leonard

THE parents of S. Leonard held distinguished rank at the Court of Clovis, King of the Franks. Clovis himself is said to have received Leonard as a child from the font, and would have rejoiced to place him as a youth in military office. But Leonard had heard the preaching of S. Remigius[1] and followed him, and desired to share his work. So Remigius trained him and he became a disciple. To the saintly bishop's solitary counsels he listened with no heedless ears, but as became a future sower of the Word of God. When Leonard grew to manhood he became an apostle of the faith. He was, says the biographer, earnest in exhorting, sweet and persuasive, lowly in speech, modest in action, trustworthy in promises, generous in charity.

The French king desired to retain him at the Court, but Leonard felt that his mission lay elsewhere. He dwelt in utter poverty with a venerable religious near Orleans. Then he went on a mission throughout Aquitaine, proclaiming Christ and working wondrously. The king gave him a large portion of the forest near Limoges, and

[1] See October 1.

here Leonard founded a community and built a church in honour of the Mother of our Lord, and containing in the south aisle an altar in memory of Remigius.

And the fame of Leonard increased and men came to him from every side, and at his prayers the sick were healed and the enslaved set free, and the hungry and thirsty souls were satisfied with the teachings of eternal life. And he distributed his disciples in the forest and set them to cultivate the ground, and was among them as a father with his sons.

So it came to pass, as the fame of Leonard still increased, that his relatives left their homes in France and came with their wives and children to be near him. And when Leonard looked on them he wondered, and said, "I fled from you, and lo you follow me!"

And they answered, "We are thine; we will not depart from thee. Show us thy ways and teach us thy paths." To which the saint replied, "I will answer you in the language of the prophet, 'I have been young, and now am old; yet saw I never the righteous forsaken, nor his seed begging their bread.' Fear ye the Lord, for they that fear Him lack nothing. Therefore come, ye children, I will teach you the fear of the Lord. God has drawn you out from the stress and strife that in this solitude you may live in holiness." So he gave them dwellings in the forest and taught them the way of life. So Leonard lived a gracious and loving life, blessing and blessed, and was laid to rest at last in the church which he had built to the honour of the Ever Virgin and the saintly Bishop of Rheims.

November 11

S. Martin

MARTIN, the soldier who became a bishop, was born in 316, in Pannonia, the region where Jerome[1] some thirty years later first saw the light. He was brought up at Pavia, in Italy. His father was an officer in the Roman army, and, like his mother, a stranger to the Christian Faith.

But in spite of pagan influences and example at home, the power of the Cross entered into Martin's heart and took possession while yet a child. To his parents' surprise and regret, he went to the church at the age of ten, and asked to be taught the Christian Faith. The Church, the Faith, the monastic life, constantly filled his mind even at that early age, although his parents' authority and his own tender years prevented him from realizing the longing of his heart. At the age of twelve he was minded to become a hermit, but was forced by his father at the age of fifteen to take the oath of military service, and serve his time in a profession for which, by character and inclination alike, he was totally unfitted. Warfare was abhorrent to the young man's soul, but there was no escape from five years'

[1] See September 30.

reluctant familiarity with the daily doings of a Roman regiment. Martin had not yet received the Baptismal Grace, but already his longings towards the Christian ideal made him singularly gracious and attractive.

Beset by coarseness which he loathed, and by religious notions which he rejected, Martin set a daily example of refined simplicity and manly self-reserve. His unpretending ways, his complete unselfishness, won the hearts of men, who had at least discernment enough to recognize the beauty of ideals which they did not attempt to pursue.

Martin was already known for his pitifulness and charity. In the depth of an exceptionally severe winter, when the extreme cold was proving fatal to very many, he met at the gate of Amiens a ragged beggar piteously pleading for help from the many who passed by. Being left by others, S. Martin felt that the man was reserved for him for sympathy. But Martin had nothing but his military cloak. He took his sword and divided it into two equal parts, giving one to the beggar and keeping one for himself. Martin's grotesque appearance in his fragment of a cloak excited the ridicule of the thoughtless bystanders. But the more thoughtful were deeply touched at the contrast between their selfishness and his generosity. That night Martin received his reward. He saw in a vision Christ Himself arrayed in that fragment of the cloak which the beggar received. He heard the Lord Christ say to the angels, "Martin, who is still but a catechumen, clothed Me with this robe." By deeds of pity such as this did Martin prepare himself to be a Christian, and at the age of eighteen he was baptized. He still retained his soldier's duty, for his tent-companion promised to follow him into religious

labours if Martin would but wait two years. So Martin consented. But the emperor was now on the eve of an expedition in Gaul, and Martin felt that the critical moment for withdrawal had obviously come. Accordingly he asked permission to retire. "I am a soldier of Christ," he said: "it is not lawful for me to fight." The officer was enraged, and declared that the proposal was only prompted by cowardly fear of battle on the following day. Martin declared himself willing to stand unarmed before the barbarians. So he left to others the task of extending the empire of Cæsar, and went forth to lifelong warfare of a purely spiritual kind.

Free to follow his aspirations, Martin with a true instinct resorted to Poitiers, and became a disciple of its saintly Bishop Hilary. How great was the privilege of that discipleship! To Martin, simple and unlearned, impressible and receptive of ideas, and firmly tenacious of truths when once he grasped them, the learned and powerful mind of Hilary was, for his intellectual and spiritual training, simply invaluable. And Hilary, the thoughtful and profound teacher, fully realized the capacity beneath that humble exterior. Inflexible towards truth, but considerate towards men, absolutely fearless of what flesh might do unto him, strong already in habits of self-discipline, fired with all the holy zeal of an apostle, and eager for the conversion of souls, there was no limit to the service which Martin, by the grace of God, might render both to mankind and to the holy Faith. Hilary, in type so different from his simple-hearted disciple, was identical with him in single-hearted devotion to his Redeemer and his God; and he imparted to Martin his own passionate zeal for the

doctrine of our Lord's Divinity, together with an intense detestation of all error by which that central truth was obscured, injured, imperilled, or compromised. The bishop was eager to retain his disciple in the Church at Poitiers, and proposed to ordain him to the holy office of deacon. But Martin, under a profound sense of personal unworthiness, resolutely shrank from accepting anything more than minor orders. And as the Faith grew more and more majestic in Martin's mind, there also grew the yearning to impart the glorious reality to others, and especially to those of his country and his home. Father and mother in their pagan darkness haunted Martin's thoughts by day, and entered into his dreams, until at last the pressure of their unconscious claims, all the more pathetic because they did not know or feel their need, became an imperious irresistible call which the young man hastened to obey.

With Hilary's regret, but full concurrence, Martin departed from the discipleship which had so firmly formed and matured him. But if he departed from Hilary's presence, he never swerved from Hilary's faith. It is instructive to remember how saint is joined with saint in spiritual parentage—how Ambrose teaches Augustine, and Hilary teaches Martin, and so the spiritual generations are continued.

Sad and full of strange presentiments was Martin as he retraced his steps across the Alps to be the bearer of apostolic truth to his native land. In some lonely passage of the Alps he was seized by a band of robbers; one raised an axe to slay him, but another diverted the blow as it fell. Martin was bound and carried before the robber-chief. In reply to the question who he was, he answered that he

was a Christian. To the further inquiry, was he not afraid? he answered that for himself he never felt more safe, but that for the state of his captors he did sincerely grieve. Martin's conduct is said to have resulted in the robber-chief's conversion. So Martin reached his home. There he succeeded in convincing his mother of the truth of the Christian Faith, and many others followed; but his father remained a heathen still.

As became a disciple of Hilary, S. Martin laboured not only to enlighten the pagan, but to restore the heretical. Arian influence was strong enough to banish S. Hilary, and it strove fiercely to thwart the labours of S. Martin. Like his illustrious teacher, Martin also suffered from the severity of the men who denied the Divinity of his Lord. In one city he was publicly scourged and expelled for teaching the Catholic Faith. So he wandered into Italy and settled in Milan. The labours of S. Ambrose[1] were not yet begun, and Milan was groaning under the Arian Bishop Auxentius. Martin strove and protested in behalf of the Faith, and drew upon himself much persecution and suffering, and at last was driven to take refuge in an island in the Gulf of Genoa.

After this Martin went back to France. Five miles from the city of Poitiers, about A.D. 360, he built a monastery on land which Hilary gave him. This was certainly one of the very earliest, if not the earliest, religious house in France. There for the next ten years Martin lived and laboured, and all that time his reputation grew, and it was determined to place him in the bishopric of Tours. But the difficulty was how to draw him from

[1] See April 4.

his beloved retreat, and the difficulty was only surmounted by fraud. A leading citizen of Tours called at the monastery and entreated Martin to come forth and visit his wife, for she lay dangerously ill. The unsuspecting saint complied. But Tours was crowded with people from the country round, resolved to place him in the bishopric. Some, it is true, resented the proposal. Martin was poor, and in bodily presence mean; his tattered dress, his uncouth ways, his utter indifference to personal appearance, would be singularly unbecoming in a bishop—so at least a bishop said. But the objections were overruled; the universal love they bore him would not have their choice denied. So the simple monk who shrank from the office of deacon had most reluctantly the burden of the episcopate thrust upon him, and here as elsewhere in life, always bowing to indications of what he believed to be the will of God, Martin undertook as from Heaven responsibilities he would gladly have been permitted to escape.

Martin the bishop did not widely differ from Martin the monk. He still cherished the monastic ideal, and cultivated it as far as possible. There was the same homeliness in dress, the same humility of heart, as before. His dwelling for a time was a lowly cell beside his church, but the endless distraction, the multitude that came and went, made Martin yearn for a seclusion which the city could not possibly accord. He therefore withdrew his dwelling to a distance.

Two miles from the episcopal city, in a deep ravine of the river Loire, he founded a religious house, Marmoutier, the great monastery whose fame has survived the changes of centuries, and stands conspicuous in the annals of Western

monasticism. There, in utter seclusion, Martin communed with God, and drew others round him in greater numbers than before, until eighty brothers assembled with him; some were lowly, but some were high-born, well-educated men, glad to exchange their wealth and easy habitations for austerity and rough-hewn caves or cells of wood in Martin's companionship and under Martin's direction. The life at Marmoutier was of the simplest kind. No manual labour was encouraged, nor was it Martin's aim to promote learning. He was no man of books. Even the copying of manuscripts was left to the younger members of the community, while the elders were absorbed in meditation and prayer. Yet out of that pure unworldliness issued forth numbers of men to be priests or bishops in the Churches in France, for all men coveted the presence of those whom Martin's zeal and piety had trained. Perhaps it was in the monastery of Marmoutier that Martin endured so patiently the persecution of his disciple S. Brice.[1]

Martin was not a man for study and for books. His mission was of the more active kind. The special feature of his work was that it lay chiefly not among intellectual opponents of the Faith, but among the ignorant and the heathen. Although bishoprics had long since been planted in the conspicuous cities of France, yet the country round lay still plunged in gross darkness, ignorant of truth, and for these it was Martin's joy to labour. The term pagan or countryman is still a synonym for ignorance of the Faith.

Forth went Martin, fired with holy zeal to preach the truth, to destroy the pagan emblems and to root out pagan superstitions, and to break down the groves in which the

[1] See November 13.

old divinities were held to linger, and to level to the earth the ancient temples, or else consecrate them to the service of the perfect religion. Everywhere, in place of sacred oak or stone, he built a chapel, or a monastery, or a church; and the altars of Jesus Christ occupied the sites of time-honoured and cruel superstitions. Martin's ascendency was wonderful, his fearlessness amazing; but he did not always convince or convert, nor always escape without bodily injury. Yet, notwithstanding sullen opposition or angered resistance, his apostolic spirit and gentle endurance and persuasive influence gradually won their way in his Master's behalf.

Miracles frequent and astounding are ascribed to Martin; and it is not for our modern materialized temper to assign limits to the spiritual gifts which may have been formerly granted to these utterly unworldly apostles of the Faith.

Martin's chief work was of this missionary kind, but he was at times involved in more public affairs. He was on a visit to Treves. New heresy had arisen in the country of Spain, and had there been treated with great severity both by the authorities of the Church and those of the State. Priscillian, the leader of the heresy, was condemned by a council of bishops, but was nevertheless consecrated a bishop by those who advocated his cause. Appeals were made to the Bishop at Rome, and to St. Ambrose, the Bishop of Milan, to support the cause of Priscillian. Both appeals were made in vain. The matter was then brought before the Emperor Maximus at Treves, and the question tried by a secular court. Martin protested. A case of heresy ought not to be

brought before secular authorities—that was one wrong. Another was that error in spiritual affairs should be visited with temporal penalties. The only punishment permissible in the case of heresy was the purely spiritual punishment of excommunication. Martin pleaded with Maximus that none but spiritual penalties should be inflicted. Maximus promised, and so long as Martin remained at Treves all was well. But no sooner was his powerful influence withdrawn than the opponents of the unfortunate heretic, having the field to themselves, stirred up such ill-will against Priscillian that Maximus broke his word, and gave sentence for his execution. This is the first execution for heresy. Martin and Ambrose united in indignant repudiation of any resort to secular force for the propagation of the Faith. Certainly here all honour is due to Martin's name. He saw what many of his successors failed to see, that violence is not one of the weapons in the armoury of the Christian. As is generally the case, persecution, even put on the lowest ground, failed to secure its object; for the execution of Priscillian and the banishment of his principal adherents did but excite universal sympathy, and caused a rapid increase of his heresy. But many centuries stained with ghastly deeds were to pass by before men learnt—if, indeed, they have everywhere learnt it even yet—that Martin's interpretation of the gospel was the only true one, and that they that take the sword shall perish with the sword. Ambrose felt no less strongly than did Martin the impossibility of justifying the resort to secular authorities and methods in matters of the spiritual sphere; and when he visited Treves he steadily refused

to have any communion with bishops guilty of such a confusion between the spiritual and the secular, the Church and the world.

Such was Ambrose's share in the incident. But for Martin things grew more complicated and perplexed. Once more he had to visit Treves to plead with Maximus, the emperor, for the lives of some chief officers of the murdered emperor Gratian. At that time the bishopric of Treves lay vacant, and the bishops of the province—the very men who brought about the execution of Priscillian—were gathered to consecrate a new bishop for the city. The person chosen was blameless of any share in Priscillian's death, and Martin found himself in great perplexity. Ought he or ought he not to unite in action with the men who left Priscillian to the mercies of the secular power? For their sakes, no; for the sake of the bishop elect, surely yes. And for the sake of Gratian's officers, if he hoped to save their lives, must he not oblige Maximus to this extent? Or was this a temptation to be resisted with all his power? Moreover, if he refused—if he still defended Priscillian—might not suspicion rest upon himself as being in secret sympathy with Priscillian's error, and so harm be done to the Church's cause, and the cause of many monks and ascetics associated with him?

Martin was in the deepest perplexity. Maximus may naturally have desired the influential approval of such a man; but ought Martin in any way to seem to countenance him? Eventually he determined that, under the circumstances, there was nothing to be done but to communicate with these secularized bishops, and with

them to consecrate the elected bishop for Treves. Martin did so, and departed, vexed in mind and self-reproachful. In the solitude of a forest on his journey home, he passed in anxious review the events of the previous days, resolved to judge himself in order that he might not be judged. The conclusion to which he came was that on the whole his action must be endorsed, but yet was at the same time most unfortunate. From that day Martin resolved never to attend any council of bishops—a resolution which he kept for the remainder of his life, some sixteen years. And he believed that thenceforward a sensible decrease of his miraculous power came over him in consequence of the part taken by him in that day's transactions.

These remaining sixteen years were passed more after Martin's ideal, in converting the heathen in his diocese of Tours, and in earnest assiduous labours for the ignorant poor who clustered by thousands round the city of his episcopal dwelling. So Martin lived and died calmly on the eleventh of November, 397, a day still known in the calendar of our Church as S. Martin's Day.

Far and wide after his departure from the world extended Martin's fame. It was the delight of the Church of the West to hold up his example to the Church of the East, and to show that Europe could excel in ideals of life which the far-off East had given them. Visitors to the monasteries of France would often hear the recital of Martin's labours. No theme was more popular, no example more beloved. "Speak to us," they said, "either in the language of the Celt or of the Gaul, so long as you tell us of Martin's goodness." So Martin was known all over

Europe. The first church at Canterbury in which Augustine worshipped had been dedicated to S. Martin, and so was the church which S. Ninian built in Galloway.

Martin's apostolic life is a signal instance of simple-hearted devotion to the cause of Christ, of overwhelming belief in the reality of the spiritual world and its nearness to this, of practical exhibition of Christianity in social duties. Firm and strong, sensitive in conscience, more ready to criticize himself than others, he laboured with one lifelong aim in view, wholly concentrated upon his work, and from this he never swerved.

Generous in the extreme, touched in early boyhood with the beauty of the Christian life, there is a graciousness about him which shines out across the ages, and still wins admiration, as it did long ago among those for whom he toiled and prayed.

November 13

S. Britius

BRITIUS, or Brice, was born at Tours or near it, and was trained from childhood by S. Martin[1] in his monastery of Marmoutier.

Brice as a young man possessed anything but an amiable disposition. He was conspicuous for a passionate temper, an unbounded pride and love of money. When Martin told him of his faults he would burst into fits of extravagant, ungovernable wrath, during which it would seem that he was hardly conscious of what he said.

But in spite of his obvious faults Martin ordained him priest. As a priest the imperfections of Brice were not less conspicuous. He made no apparent progress in overcoming them.

One day, while Martin was seated, as was his wont, on a wooden bench in the open court of the dwelling, Brice rushed madly in and poured forth in unmeasured terms abusive words against him. It seems that on the previous day Martin had rebuked him for extravagance. Although Brice was poor by birth, yet now that he was a priest he found the means for the purchase of slaves, and

[1] See November 11.

lived in a manner widely contrasted with that which was natural to his social station. Martin's rebuke stung him to the quick. He stood trembling and pale with rage, asserting that he was a better man than Martin who brought him up, that he had been familiar from childhood with the sacred institutions of the Church, never contaminated with the atmosphere of a camp and a soldier's life as Martin had been, and declared that the aged saint was in his dotage, weakened by puerile superstitions and senseless dreams.

Martin sat through all this, patient, silent, imperturbable, until the storm was exhausted, and permitted Brice to depart without uttering a single word.

The recorder of this strange interview between the saints believes that Martin was all through engaged in prayer. For presently Brice returned, his furious passion melted into an agony of repentance. He threw himself at Martin's feet, besought him to forgive, and declared that his wrathful abusiveness was uttered under the instigation of the devil.

Martin did not find it difficult to forgive. But he answered that he was well aware whence such inspirations came, and that they were hurtful rather to him who uttered than to him who heard them.

Frequent complaints were made against the unhappy Brice. Martin was even requested to remove him from the priesthood; but he steadily refused, lest men should think that he acted from personal vindictiveness. Only he regarded Brice as his trial, and sorrowfully said, "If Christ bore with Judas, why should not Martin with Brice?"

At the same time Martin by no means intended all that

this parallel might seem to imply, that Brice would end as Judas did. On the contrary, he firmly believed that better things were in store for the turbulent, ill-tempered priest. Brice would one day win the victory over that passionate disposition which had been hitherto so calamitous. Martin's faith here reveals itself in all its graciousness. He hoped against hope. Notwithstanding all appearances and facts to the contrary, he still believed that Brice would at last become a Saint; and he boldly predicted that it would be so. But he saw also that Brice would win the victory over self through the discipline of many griefs.

Now, Martin's confidence in Brice wrought by the Grace of God most wondrously. In course of time the ungoverned passion came more under the dominion of his will. And, strange to say, when Martin died it was Brice whom men selected to rule the diocese of Tours in succession to that simple-minded, unworldly bishop.[1]

So Brice sat in his master's place. For three and thirty years he fed them with a faithful and true heart, and ruled them prudently with all his power.

Nevertheless his episcopate was overclouded with suspicions. He was unjustly charged with a sinful connection. It was utterly untrue, but it was believed; and, notwithstanding thirty-three years of work, he was driven out by the citizens of Tours and forced to appeal to Rome that his innocence might be vindicated. Meanwhile the people chose Justinian to succeed him. Justinian followed Brice to Rome, but died on the way. The citizens of Tours elected another, Armentius, as their bishop

[1] A.D. 397.

Brice, conscious of his innocence, sought the Roman bishop, and with many tears and lamentations declared that although the accusation was most false, yet it was a most just requital for his scornful and abusive words to the saintly Martin more than thirty years before. "How often," exclaimed the victim of false suspicions, "did I call him a madman and fool, and seeing his face was blind to his virtues!" Brice was entirely acquitted of the charge, but his bishopric was occupied and he remained in Rome. After seven years he returned. On the day he re-entered Tours, Armentius was being carried to his burial, and Brice re-assumed his place as bishop. For seven years more he ruled the Church; if we may judge from the verdict of a succeeding generation, chastened and refined by the discipline of sorrow.

Towards the close of his long episcopate of forty-seven years he built a small church over the place where Martin lay buried; a fitting act of reparation to his noble master, who showed him so much forbearance and whom he had so poorly understood.

November 15

S. Machutus

S. MACHUTUS, better known to us as S. Malo, was born about 547 of Welsh parentage, his father being lord of what is now known as Monmouthshire.

S. Malo was born on Easter Day and was brought up in the Welsh Monastery of Lancarvan in Glamorganshire, near the edge of the sea, then under Abbot Brendan, one of the most distinguished men of his age for learning and piety. Malo became Brendan's favourite disciple, studious and devout, and delighting in the singing of the Psalms and the reading of the Scriptures. Malo's unworldly simple-mindedness was the jest of his frivolous and thoughtless companions in the monastery, but he was not to be turned aside from the path which he had chosen.

Brendan watched with joy his disciple's advancement, and knowing what depth of wisdom lay beneath that humble exterior, sent him forth to preach, convinced that he would touch the hearts of the people by the beauty of his character still more than by the solidity of his learning.

The judgment of Brendan was correct. Men were constrained by Malo's influence: they desired to have him as their bishop.

But Malo shrank from these responsibilities, and determined rather to leave this land than bear the burden which the people's admiration would impose on him. Wherefore Malo took Brendan and departed and went to Brittany.

The ancient town of Aleth in Brittany on the edge of the sea now bears the name of Malo and was the spot where he landed. When Malo entered among them the natives of the land were chiefly pagan, and he resolved to undertake the work of their conversion. For a second time great blessings followed on his preaching. The little church already standing, sufficient for the Christian element of the population before he came, was now too small for the concourse of the people, and he preached to the multitude in the open air. Miracles accompanied his words and whole crowds were drawn into the Baptismal waters. Over these newly converted multitudes Malo naturally presided. He was consecrated bishop over the people in Armorica. The gratitude of his converts brought him many gifts for the building of monasteries and churches. The wealthier left him lands. But this prosperity involved him in jealousies and disputes. Men looked with envious eyes on the treasures which flowed into the Church, and Malo became an object of resentment and dislike. So violent grew the discords and bitterness, that in despair he resolved to leave for ever the land whose ingratitude nearly broke his heart. In his grief he uttered an anathema against the disturbers of the Church's peace and departed.

But, says the legend, when Malo was gone darkness and helplessness settled down on the unhappy land of Brittany, and evils multiplied. Never before were there so many

blind and lame and leprous. There was a visitation of famine and a dreadful mortality. The power of Malo was withdrawn from them. His sweet and gracious influence was no more in their midst ready to soothe their quarrels and reconcile their disputes. Even the Saint's most worldly-minded foes confessed that things went better when Malo lived among them. So ultimately the people in their penitence sent after him, imploring him to return. They threw themselves at his feet and the aged Saint returned. He revoked his anathema, gave his blessing to the people, and then taking a last affectionate farewell, for notwithstanding all their entreaties he refused to continue among them, departed into solitude and peace. Shortly after, his last illness came upon him. Malo lay on ashes on the floor of a lonely cell and lifted up his eyes to heaven, and so yielded up his soul to God.[1]

[1] Nov. 627.

November 17

S. Hugh

HUGH, the saintly Bishop of Lincoln, was born of a distinguished house on the frontiers of Savoy.[1] His father, lord of Avalon, owner of castles and lands, when Hugh's mother died took with him his son, then only a child of eight, and departing from the secular life entered a House of Regular Canons belonging to the Cathedral of Grenoble, enriched by his generosity and built near his own estates. Attached to the Priory was a school, frequented by sons of noble families, and under the charge of the senior canon. In these austere surroundings Hugh was disciplined with much severity, and his life was made a perpetual martyrdom. Afterwards, as bishop, describing his youthful experiences, he used to say that he had never known the pleasures of the world. While the other boys spent hours in childish games, Hugh's master, discerning the boy's ability, dissuaded him from such relaxation as waste of time and unsuitable to his future profession. "My little Hugh," he said, "my little Hugh, I am training you for Christ, and amusement is not for you."

[1] ? A.D. 1143.

Whatever might be anticipated as the outcome of such restriction, it did not in the least hinder the full expansion of Hugh's character and powers. He threw the whole force of his nature into study, realizing that although it is greater to do than to know God's will, yet knowledge must precede action.[1] The gifts of grace came early to control and spiritualize the endowments of nature, and Hugh was not more distinguished for his ability than for his devotion. He possessed an extraordinary memory, from which nothing escaped; but what enhanced its value beyond words was the grace which directed him to the study of sacred truth.

Hugh was permitted to soothe the last years of his father's life, having the care of his aged parent especially entrusted to him. After discharging this duty came his ordination. He was only in his nineteenth year when the Bishop of Grenoble ordained him deacon.[2]

But the house of the Canons Regular did not satisfy Hugh's ideal. He longed passionately for a discipline more invigorating and austere, such as flourished in the Grand Chartreuse. A visit to that famous house was a critical moment in his career. Everything he saw appealed powerfully to his imagination. The imperturbable calm, the remoteness from the petty meannesses and tumults of earth, the very site—far up amid the clouds and near to heaven—suggested, invited, constrained to unbroken meditation on heavenly things. Hugh visited the library. Was not study made fascinating by the wealth of spiritual thought there laid open to his perusal? And the dwellers there—something of the serene repose born

[1] "Magna Vita S. Hugonis," i. 2. [2] A.D. 1153.

of reflection, meditation, self-mastery, and prayer was manifested in their countenances as Hugh gazed earnestly upon them. There was a joy, an absence of care, an unworldliness of speech which fascinated him. The isolated dwelling, where each lived apart while yet their life was lived in common, strongly commended itself to him as a masterly blending of the social with the individual; leaving each man full scope for his independent development, while not depriving him of the blessings of fraternal intercourse and communion. Each lived alone and yet all acted in common. Hugh was charmed, convinced, and conquered. He desired nothing better than to become a monk of the Grand Chartreuse. Enthusiastic, impulsive, determined, he confided his secret to one of the older brothers of his order, a man formerly distinguished in the outer world, but now matured by many years' experience of self-repression. He looked on youthful Hugh, saw his enthusiasm, his delicacy of feature, his inexperience, remembered his noble birth, and concluded that this was not the material from which Carthusian monks are made. "Presumption!" he muttered. "These men are harder than stone, they have no mercy either on themselves or on others. Their clothing, worse than sackcloth, would cut your skin and flesh to the bone. Their discipline would destroy a constitution as delicate as yours."

The old monk's warnings did but kindle more vehemently Hugh's desire.

"As water thrown on flame increases conflagration, so hindrances enhance the heart's desire," says the Old Chronicler.

Other members of the order took a different view and

encouraged Hugh's ambition. But the prior, fully conscious of the young man's worth, not only dissuaded him with all his power, but extorted from him a solemn oath never to leave the Priory so long as he was at the head of it. Hugh consented, and took the oath, and soon afterwards broke it. He left the House, and made his way to the Grand Chartreuse. The memory of the broken oath is expressly said to have caused him no distress even in the calm judgment of later years. He declared that he never regretted it, but rather rejoiced in it. The grace of God ever struggles with human infirmity even in the noblest of His saints; and some have thought it strange that the light of mature reflection did not produce a different estimate. Good men may easily fail to realize the application of Christian principles to their personal experience; but Hugh evidently regarded his oath as more or less the outcome of compulsion.

In the solitude of the Grand Chartreuse Hugh was visited with severe temptations. It is the continual experience of the saints that their entrance into more complete surrender to God is beset and hindered by more persistent efforts of the evil powers.

Hugh implored the protection of Jesus by fervent and constant prayer.

Many venerable and saintly men were in the cloisters of the Chartreuse at the time of Hugh's admission. Learned and simple alike were there; some highly trained, and some unable even to read. Yet these last had committed to memory large portions of the Word of God. While at the Grand Chartreuse, Hugh was ordained a priest. His devotion at the altar

reminded men of the words of the Canticles, "My Beloved is mine, and I am His."

Meanwhile Hugh's self-discipline was severe. He wore sackcloth, he scourged himself, he fasted to such an extent as to inflict permanent injury on his health. Physicians ascribed the corpulence from which he suffered in later life to these imprudent austerities. But if he injured his body, he strengthened his character.

Hugh's genius was of the practical order, as the superiors discerned when they imposed upon him the office of bursar, or steward, of the Chartreuse. The appointment was, as the prior found, extremely good for the community in general, for the prior in particular, and for Hugh himself. The community affairs became well regulated, the prior relieved of many anxieties, so that "he knew not ought he had, save the bread which he did eat," [1] and Hugh himself was brought into contact with the outer world, and found scope for the exercise of his practical gifts.

Great changes were approaching for the bursar of the Chartreuse. King Henry II. of England had recently founded a Carthusian monastery at Witham, which, through the incompetence of two successive priors, was on the verge of being dissolved, when a nobleman recommended Hugh of Avalon as qualified to raise the fortunes of a religious house. Accordingly, the king sent an episcopal messenger—the Bishop of Bath—to beg for Hugh from the community at Chartreuse.

Meanwhile Hugh, thus sought for by the English king, was humbled to the dust in his cell in bitter struggle for

[1] Gen. xxxix. 6.

the mastery of self. By passionate tears, by frequent confession, by severe self-discipline, he sought and obtained the strength of God. "By Thy Passion, cross, and life-giving death," he cried, "O Lord, deliver me." And he was delivered.

So the Bishop of Bath, accompanied by the Diocesan Bishop of Grenoble, arrived at the Grand Chartreuse, and begged that Hugh might be sent to England. The community were dismayed. They refused immediate reply. Their opinion was divided. The prior would not hear of it. Others took a larger view, and considered the advantage to the Order. It was impossible to conceal such a man in their obscurity. One day he would be heard of, they predicted, in the highest places of the Church. "The virtues of Hugh," said one sagacious person, "are rather those of a bishop than of a monk."

At last Hugh himself was consulted.

"I will tell you frankly what I think," said Hugh. "Greatly helped as I am by your counsels and example, yet even here in your midst I cannot keep my soul a single day. Therefore I marvel that it could enter any wise man's head to send me far away to rule the souls of others."

But Hugh was not permitted to escape. The decision was referred to the Bishop of Grenoble. The bishop determined that Hugh should follow the example of Him Whom it is ever sweet to follow, the Only-begotten Son of the Father on High, Who from the loftiest heights of Deity, for the salvation of many, came down to the levels of human life. So, too, must Hugh depart for a while from his beloved retreat, and be exiled in the world.

Hugh entreated and protested, but in vain. He had to turn reluctantly away from the solitude of the Chartreuse, and at last was installed at Witham.

Everything at Witham was in a deplorable condition. The villagers had not been removed, nor any proper provision made for the monastery. Hugh began by summoning the inhabitants of the place, and offered them compensation. Then he went to the king, who objected to this costly process.

"Assuredly, my lord," said Hugh, "unless compensation is made to all these men down to the last farthing, this place cannot be bestowed upon us."

So the king had to buy up the miserable huts, the old, wretched half-rotten dwellings, at a considerable price.

"See, my lord king," said Hugh, facetiously, "I am only a stranger and a poor man in your kingdom, and yet I have made you possessor of many houses."

The king replied with a smile, "Riches of that sort only make me poor."

Then said Hugh, having obtained the answer he required, "I have no place to rest my head—give these houses to me."

"What!" said the king. "Do you imagine I cannot build you better than these? What would you do with these if they were yours?"

"Details like this are beneath your kingly majesty," answered the prior. "This is my first request of you—it is a small one; why delay to grant it me?"

The king was delighted with his boldness and his readiness. "If the man is so persuasive in words, what

would he be in actions?" said Henry, and yielded to Hugh's petition.

Hugh then restored the materials to the original inhabitants. But funds for the building of the monastery were not so easily obtained. The king was appealed to, but in vain. Hugh, with brother Girard, then sought an interview. The king assented to everything, but gave nothing, nor did he even suggest a time when assistance would be possible. This was too much for Brother Girard's equanimity. He burst out in anger. It was better to take refuge among Alpine rocks than to beg from such a man, who considers anything lost if given for the salvation of his soul. And Girard threatened to abandon the kingdom. With considerable dignity Henry heard him out in silence, and without condescending to reply, turned to Hugh.

"What say you? Are you also disposed to go and abandon me and my kingdom?"

"No, my lord," said Hugh. "I do not despair of you. Rather I sympathize with your difficulties and duties, which hinder you from these considerations."

"By my soul," said the king, embracing Hugh, "while I live you shall never depart from my kingdom." And he sent the aid required, with orders that the work should be completed speedily.

After that no man was in greater favour with the king than the Prior of Witham. Hugh acquired powerful influence over him, prompted him to deeds of mercy, turned his anger into pity, counselled him well both for the safety of the kingdom and the welfare of the people.

Hugh never flattered. He boldly rebuked the king for

delaying the appointment to bishoprics and abbeys, urging that almost all the evils of the Church were caused by unworthy prelates.

The prior was exceedingly anxious to obtain for his convent copies of Holy Scripture. "The Bible," said Hugh, "is blessedness and wealth in time of peace, sword and shield in time of strife, our food in hunger, our strength in weakness." The king, hearing of his desire, ascertained that the monks of Winchester had just completed a new manuscript, intended for reading in the refectory during meals. Accordingly Henry sent for the Prior of Winchester, and by many promises of ample compensation secured the Bible, and sent it to the monks at Witham, who were entirely ignorant of its history. There was great rejoicing in the convent over the splendour and beauty of the king's generous gift. Presently, however, enters a monk from Winchester, and, to his amazement, finds the Winchester Bible proudly displayed as a royal gift to Witham. He informs the community how the king had obtained it.

Hugh was horrified. "Has the king, then, deprived your Church of your own labours? Believe me, my dear brother, your book shall be at once returned to you." The monk was alarmed, and protested. Hugh insisted, and the manuscript was duly returned, to the delight of the Convent of Winchester.

But wider responsibilities than the rule of a monastery were to be shortly imposed on Hugh. The See of Lincoln had been vacant sixteen years, and the diocese was in disorder. The king advised the Canons of Lincoln to elect the Prior of Witham. They resented it, but submitted.

Hugh's reply to his electors was characteristic. There was no wonder if the king and the archbishop suggested such a course, unworthy though he was to be the object of such consideration; for the king naturally desired the uninterrupted progress of an order which he had introduced from afar; and the archbishop, being the only member of a religious order among the bishops, naturally desired companions. But an election so arranged was not good; in Hugh's opinion it was null and void. Let them proceed to a new election, influenced neither by primate nor king, but simply by the will and direction of the Almighty.

The Chapter of Lincoln, charmed with Hugh's independence and refusal, acted upon his advice, but re-elected him. Once more the prior refuses. He is a subordinate of the Grand Chartreuse where his superior resides.

"My Lord of Canterbury is primate and head of the Anglican Church under the supreme pontiff; but in this matter another stands between us. Either, then, abandon your proposal, or the alternative is a weary journey to Chartreuse. For without the order of my prior, no man shall bind this burden on my shoulders." The journey was made, and the community of Chartreuse yielded Hugh to the will of the Canons of Lincoln.

Hugh on his way to consecration still clung to the simple habits of his order. He would have no gorgeous trappings upon his horse, and tied a bundle of his belongings to the back of his saddle, to the scandal and dismay of the wealthy, dignified canons who accompanied him. They tried by sarcasm and persuasion to remove his bundle of clothes, but vainly. At last, when near to

Winchester, the prospect of passing through the city streets in this guise of poverty rendered them desperate, and some priest stealthily cut the fastening of Hugh's bundle, and hurried it away among the baggage. Hugh rode on supremely indifferent.

He was consecrated in London on S. Matthew's Day, 1186. When he reached Lincoln to be enthroned the steward of his house reminded him that it was customary for the bishop to provide venison for the feast from his own forest.

"Kill three hundred," said Hugh—"more if need be." His magnificent estimate of requirement was long the amusement of the king and his court.

The appointment of Hugh to Lincoln was a bold venture justified by its success; for he was totally unversed in English ways, and could not even speak the language of those to whom he ministered. None was more conscious of his disqualifications than himself. He wrote to the archbishop, frankly stating his own defects, and entreating that suitable clergy might be sent to supplement his deficiencies. The archbishop sent two men of marked ability.

Hugh's sympathies were always with the people. One of the royal privileges which pressed severely upon the people was the king's sole right to hunt in all the forests of the land. The counties were obliged to stock the forests, but might not hunt in them; and the foresters who enforced the king's right upon the people were notorious for tyranny and cruelty. "In their minds," says Hugh's biographer, "violence took the place of law." This tyranny Hugh was the first to resist. He boldly excommunicated

the king's chief forester. Henry was furious. It happened that a canonry at Lincoln was vacant at the time, and the king asked for it in behalf of one of his courtiers. "The offices of the Church are not for courtiers," was Hugh's reply, "but for those who serve the altar. Let the king reward secular work with secular distinctions."

Hugh's enemies at the court stirred Henry's wrath against this bold speech. The bishop was summoned before the king at Woodstock. There he found the king seated in the woods, while his principal officers sat encircling him. Hugh saluted Henry, but was ignored by the entire assembly. He looked for a moment on this strange scene, then pushed aside some nobleman, and sat himself down beside the king. Still no one spoke. The king took a needle and thread, and began to stitch a bandage round a finger of his left hand. Still no one broke the silence. Hugh promptly realized the position, and how to treat it. He turned to the king and said, "How like you are to your relatives at Falaise." Henry burst into a loud laugh. The more acute among the courtiers, who realized the joke, were astounded at the bishop's audacity, but could not repress a smile, and as the king laughed they laughed too. But the majority did not understand, until the king took upon himself to explain the bishop's meaning. "Don't you see the insult which this barbarian offers us? Then I will explain it you. It is acknowledged that our ancestor William, the Conqueror of this country, was born of humble parentage in the Norman city of Falaise, known for its skill in stitching leather. And this scoffer, seeing me stitch my finger, calls me kinsman to the people of Falaise."

Disarmed by Hugh's imperturbable coolness, Henry expostulated with him for his treatment of the forester. The bishop defended himself. The king yielded. The forester was soundly flogged, owned his offence, and became afterwards one of Hugh's firmest friends; and the king made no more requests for canonries at Lincoln.

Hugh used to call the canons at Lincoln "My masters;" but he ruled them with firm determination. He insisted upon residence and the discharge of their duties, and while other bishops were at constant war with their chapters, Hugh succeeded in maintaining peace, and, in point of fact, secured the goodwill of the cathedral body. "And yet," said he, "this freedom from discord is not because they find me meek and gentle. I'm a peppery man, and when I preside in Chapter flash out at the smallest provocation. But they know that they chose me and must put up with me, and so they make a virtue of a necessity. And I thank them for it. They have never opposed me since first I came. And when we come away after a Chapter meeting there isn't one of them, I think, who doubts my regard for him, or by whom I am not beloved in return."

Hugh as bishop continued the frugal habits of the cloister. He took no meat, but lived much on fish, and drank a little wine. At table he loved a joke, yet was always mindful of his dignity. It was noticed that when players or musicians were present at his table he maintained a greater reserve than usual. He would have selections from Scripture from the passions of the martyrs, from the lives of the saints, read aloud at meals. But Hugh found that the active duties of a bishop required a

more generous fare than the contemplative life of a recluse. And the excessive austerities of Chartreuse had seriously impaired his health. Still he was a man of exceptional vigour. He tired out all his officials, yet seemed insensible to fatigue. He would sometimes rise before dawn, and work all day and far on into the following night without breaking his fast. But this physical power did not render him exacting or forgetful or inconsiderate to others. He even compelled some of his clergy to take food in the summer heat before celebrating the Eucharist, lest the long functions at the dedication of churches, together with the heat and want of food and fatigue, should render them unequal to discharge their duties. And when some were afraid or offended, Hugh rebuked them for weakness of faith and want of penetration, since they could neither obey his authority nor recognize his reasons.

Hugh introduced considerable reforms in the prevalent practices at Confirmation. It is curiously illustrative of the times that his biographer commends him for refusing to confirm on horseback. The monk describes a confirmation of which he himself was witness. It was held by a young bishop on horseback in the streets, and the children, frightened by the restive horses, were pushed and cuffed by the bishop's officials; and in the midst of this unseemliness, irreverence, and confusion, confirmed anyhow. Hugh abhorred such irregularities. He refused to confirm in batches, and insisted on conferring the Sacrament upon one at a time.

Hugh's was a kindly nature. He had a young man as sacristan, of excellent character, but so vain of his good

looks and curly hair, that he positively refused to submit to the tonsure and to be shorn of his beauty. The bishop ordered him to obey, but three days passed and the guilty locks were still untouched. The youth expected a severe punishment. But Hugh, twining the offending locks around his finger, only said, "Come, let me cut your hair myself;" and so won the young man's heart to consent to the sacrifice.

Hugh's pity for the lepers was most Christlike. His chaplain watched with mingled admiration and disgust when the bishop washed their sores and kissed the feet of these terribly afflicted sufferers.

"Good Jesu," exclaims the chaplain, "forgive the unhappy soul who records these things! It does not escape Thy knowledge, but may it escape Thy severity, how loathsome was the sight to me—their swollen and discoloured skin, their lips consumed away." But Hugh said they were flowers of Paradise, bright pearls for the diadem of the Eternal King. Thus by faith did he anticipate the power which shall change the body of our humiliation into likeness with His glorious Body.

Hugh's spiritual convictions were not of the kind which need legends about miraculous transmutations of the Eucharistic elements into material and visible flesh and blood. His reply to those who came to him with a story of this order is memorable.

"In the Name of God," said Hugh, "let them keep to themselves the signs of their infidelity. What have we to do with things like this—we who daily gaze on the perfect and heavenly Sacrifice?"

Thus Hugh rebuked his companions for their want of

faith, which caused them to bolster their religion with sensational miracles.

Hugh told the truth to all men with a fearless frankness often unpalatable. He rebuked Archbishop Hubert, telling him that it were better to be more engrossed in the functions of his priesthood and less in the cares of state —a counsel which the archbishop resented.

Among the gravest of his episcopal anxieties was to Hugh the exercise of patronage. He wondered at some who were said to rejoice when an opportunity of filling a benefice came in their way. For himself nothing in life ever burdened him more than the choice of fit persons to whose care ecclesiastical office and labour might be wisely entrusted. Nothing in the world caused him more pain than when through lack of discernment he appointed one who proved himself unworthy.

Hugh was no less fearless even with Richard Cœur-de-Lion than with Henry. King Richard was in difficulties owing to his war with France.[1] He appealed to his barons, among whom the bishops were included. An assembly was held at Oxford. Archbishop Hubert presided. The archbishop supported the king's demands. So did the Bishop of London. But Hugh refused, maintaining that Lincoln was not bound to provide for foreign wars, but for English only. Salisbury gained courage from Hugh's example, and also protested. The archbishop, greatly incensed, fearing that Hugh's boldness might be largely followed, dissolved the council and sent a message to the king that nothing could be done, owing to the Bishop of Lincoln's resistance. Richard

[1] A.D. 1197.

retaliated by ordering the possessions of the Bishops of Salisbury and Lincoln to be confiscated to the Crown. But no man dared to invade the possessions of Hugh. Men feared his anathema as they feared the grave. Thus the officers of the Crown stood helpless between the king's command and the bishop's authority; a state of things which could not possibly continue.

Hugh, prompt as ever, ready for action, crossed the Channel.[1] It was S. Augustine's day. Richard was hearing Mass in the chapel, in the royal seat near the entrance. Hugh saluted. But Richard only glared at him, and deliberately turned his face away. Nothing daunted, Hugh insisted.

"Kiss me, my lord king."

Richard still remained with face averted.

Hugh, determined not to be baffled, took hold upon the royal robe and shook it. "You owe me the kiss. I have come a long way to see you."

"You don't deserve it," said the king.

"Nay, but I do," retorted the bishop.

And Richard, secretly admiring the man's courage, and with a smile on his formidable features, yielded, and gave Hugh the required salutation. Five bishops and two archbishops were the wondering spectators of this strange interview. And when they saw Hugh victorious they made a space for him among them. But Hugh passed by them all, and knelt close by the altar, soon absorbed in devotion, forgetful of all else but the Divine presence, while Richard could scarcely keep from that kneeling figure a wondering and searching gaze.

[1] August 28, 1198.

When the Sacrifice was offered and the chapel deserted, Hugh sought an interview with Richard, and complained that the king had unjustly treated him. Richard blamed the archbishop. "Saving the honour of God and my own and your salvation," answered Hugh, "I have never in the least opposed your service." Richard was pacified, and rewarded the bold bishop with gifts, and entertained him. Hugh, never forgetting his spiritual office, availed himself of the opportunity to draw Richard aside, and claiming the king as one of his flock, inquired into the state of his soul. Richard took the inquiry in the right spirit, and king and bishop were soon engaged in religious conversation. Hugh told Richard frankly that rumours accused him of two grievous wrongs—the one of being untrue to his marriage, the other of selling preferment in the Church, or giving it away from wrongful motives. The king listened with respect, and promised amendment. "Verily," said Richard, when Hugh was gone to his lodgings, "if other bishops were such as he, there isn't a king who would venture to oppose them."

Some wily courtiers, thinking to make political capital out of this pious relationship between bishop and king, artfully proposed that Hugh should be requested to take back to England royal letters demanding subsidies for the war. Hugh bluntly refused.

"Far be it from me," said Hugh. "It is neither suited to my mind nor to my office. I'm no royal-letter carrier, nor will I co-operate in schemes of exaction. See you how this powerful man is like a suppliant with a drawn sword. While he begs he forces. I will be no partner in such matters, nor gain the royal favour by wrecking my

neighbours and incurring the wrath of the Almighty God."

Richard saw that the net was spread in vain. So he bade the invincible Hugh return to his diocese, coupling this dismissal with a request that the bishop would remember him in his prayers.

When Hugh's companions entered the chapel that day, the song of the chanting choir fell upon their ears, commemorating some confessor of the Faith. "Hail to Thee, noble officer of Christ!" The words sounded in their ears for consolation; evidently, thought they, God approved the action of their fearless chief.

Back in England, fresh troubles awaited Hugh. King Richard bade the Archbishop of Canterbury send twelve of the wealthy canons of Lincoln for service abroad at their own expense. The archbishop, subservient as usual, bade Hugh see that this was done. But Hugh would bend to no man against his conscience. If the twelve canons are forced to go to the king, Hugh would go also as their companion. The king, in a rage, ordered the Bishop of Lincoln's possessions to be seized. But the officers were afraid. Richard stormed. He would send one of his boldest officers, but could not spare him from the war.

"Did I not truly tell you," observed Hugh, when the news reached him, "that if the voice of these men is Jacob's, the hands are the hands of Esau?"

Hugh issued an excommunication against all who dare to invade the property of the Church.

That night his companions lay down to rest amid anxious forebodings. But Hugh slept the sleep of the just; only they observed that the sleeper, who often in his

repose would murmur "Amen," uttered it more frequently than ever, with deep emphasis and solemnity. But that was the only sign of the brave bishop's inward trouble.

But when day came, Hugh, active as ever, started for London to see Hubert the archbishop.

"Don't you know, my lord bishop," said Hubert, "that as a man with dropsy thirsts for water, so does my lord the king thirst for gold?"

"Well," said Hugh, bluntly, "even if he has the dropsy, I won't be the water with which he may fill himself."

Hugh departed, and, notwithstanding king and archbishop, held to the rights of his Church tenaciously. But shortly after Richard died at Fontevrault,[1] and all rivalries were forgotten. Hugh crossed the sea at once, and was present at the king's burial, and offered the Eucharistic Sacrifice in behalf of the monarch who had so often opposed, yet respected him.

Hugh regarded Richard's successor with very different feelings. King John made profuse professions, but Hugh disbelieved them, and bluntly told him so. John put much faith in the virtues of a charm set in gold which he wore round his neck and superstitiously credited with amazing powers of averting evil. Hugh listened to John's recital with manifest impatience. At last he broke in: "Put no confidence in that unconscious stone, but only in the living and heavenly stone, which is Jesus Christ."

The king and the bishop stood together in the porch of the church at Fontevrault. Before them on the walls was described in vivid frescoes the final severance of the

[1] A.D. 1199.

evil from the good. Hugh pointed out to his companion the kings on the left hand of the Judge and the awful scroll of condemnation, "Depart, ye cursed, into everlasting fire." "It was well placed at the entrance of the church," said Hugh, "as a solemn, impressive reminder to all who entered that their supreme necessity was repentance and forgiveness." But John drew the bishop over to the other side, and indicated the kings with crowns of glory, angel-guided into everlasting joy. "You should rather point to these, my lord bishop, whose companionship we hope for, and whose example we pray to follow." But the words rang insincerely from John's lips, and it was not long before his conduct refuted them.

Hugh's last hours were spent in his house in London near the Temple. His custom, following the Carthusian rule, was to confess every week. And now, being near death, he made his confession three times over, first to the Dean of Lincoln, then to the precentor who succeeded him as bishop, and finally to the Archdeacon of Northampton. After this, ill though he was, he summoned strength to rise from his bed, and knelt to receive the Holy Sacrament.

He then considered the disposal of his goods. The practice of making wills, now becoming prevalent among ecclesiastics, was much to Hugh's distaste. "For," said he, "I never considered what I have as mine, but rather as the property of the Church which I govern." It was only, therefore, to prevent misappropriation that Hugh consented to make a will, leaving all he had to Jesus Christ and His poor.

Then he sent for the dean and the two archdeacons, and imposed upon them the discharge of this duty, and

then most characteristically he put on his stole and pronounced anathema against all who should by fraud or violence pervert his last intentions.

During the two months while Hugh lay dying he was visited both by the king and by the archbishop. To the king he would say but little. The archbishop, still very sore at Hugh's frequent resistance of his authority, suggested that the time was appropriate for repenting the treatment so often bestowed in the past upon his primate and spiritual father.

Hugh replied that he remembered well enough that he had often provoked the archbishop's anger; but the only thing which troubled him was that he had not done so much more frequently. In the sight of the all-seeing God he firmly promised to make amends for this should he be spared to live among them. Many a time, to avoid giving offence, he had been silent when he ought to have spoken.

But Hugh was not to recover. He grew much worse, yet refused to put aside the hair shirt, even at the entreaty of his brethren. He made the most minute directions for death and burial. When the time of departure drew near he was to be laid upon a cross of ashes on the ground, monks from Westminster and singers from S. Paul's were to be sent for to chaunt the last offices, the body was to be buried at Lincoln in the minster which Hugh rebuilded—buried, moreover, fully robed in the same vestments in which he was consecrated.

Amid his last sufferings—for he suffered greatly—Hugh prayed often, "O Blessed God, grant me rest. Good Lord, true God, grant me at last Thy rest." A faithful

attendant, afterwards his biographer, assured him affectionately that rest was coming soon, for the pulse of life beat faint and fainter. "Oh, blessed are they," murmured Hugh, "to whom the day of the last judgment will bring eternal rest!"

It was November when the cross of ashes was traced upon the ground, and the choirs of Westminster and S. Paul's chaunted the ninety-first psalm; and when the closing words were reached, "He shall call upon me, and I will hear him: yea, I am with him in trouble; I will deliver him, and bring him to honour," Hugh gave the sign, and was laid upon the ashes on the ground. Then they sang more quickly, for they knew he would not last; and just as they were singing, "Lord, now lettest Thou Thy servant depart in peace," with a look of ineffable calm upon his features, Hugh yielded up his spirit, and was gone.[1]

[1] November 16, 1200.

November 20

S. Edmund

FROM an ancient and princely house came Edmund, the Saxon king. Born about 841, he is described, within a century after his death, as having been earnestly devoted to the Christian Faith from his earliest years, and chosen by unanimous consent to the government of his people. He seemed to his contemporaries as one born to rule, dignified in presence, and endowed with the qualities essential for command. Yet these imposing gifts were blended with persuasive gentleness and humility.

But Edmund's distinction was not to consist in political success or length of days. If he was a king before he was fifteen, he became a martyr before he was thirty.

The land was grievously afflicted by the invasion of the Danes. Fierce heathen, attracted by hopes of plundering the great religious houses, they destroyed and ruined all Christian institutions, and burnt up all the houses of God in the land. They spared nothing. The monastery at Wearmouth, where Bede wrote his "History;" the famous Abbey of S. Hilda at Whitby; the monastery of Lindisfarne; the great Convent of Ely, founded by S. Etheldreda;—these and many others, together with precious manuscripts, which

the ignorant barbarians could not value, were ruined and burnt, and the communities massacred.

After all this wholesale destruction and slaughter of unarmed monks and sisters, the Danes poured into East Anglia, under Hingwar, their chief. Hingwar obtained a victory over the defenders, and sent a peremptory message to Edmund, residing at Hoxne, ordering him to surrender his treasures, to renounce his religion, and to become their vassal and subordinate. The formidable victors seem to have crushed the Saxon spirit, and when Edmund took counsel with his nobles voices were heard in favour of immediate submission; they shrank from a struggle which must end in hopeless defeat, and feared to raise the anger of a fierce and brutal conqueror. One of the bishops advised the king to take to flight while escape was possible; but Edmund would not save himself, still less would he accept the Danish conditions.

We are permitted to see Edmund in the house at Hoxne among his vacillating nobles, and surrounded by his menacing and powerful foes, strong in the moral splendour of a noble determination to die rather than surrender weakly either his responsibilities or his faith. For in that hour of crisis what weighed with him most was religious conviction. He felt that God had imposed upon him by solemn consecration the government of the Anglo-Saxon people. It was his to rule them with a faithful and true heart, and to rule them prudently with all his power, to lead them to the highest possible development in the light of the Christian Faith. That was his duty, his mission. But when the unbelieving Danes demanded of him the practical surrender of his religion,

when they required him to reign as subordinate of a heathen power, they asked him to secure his throne by infidelity to his deepest convictions and by abandonment of the truest interests of his people. That was precisely what the noble-minded young king could not do. He could die, but he could not dishonour his convictions and fail his people. His whole soul shrank from and repudiated the mean proposal.

So the Danes surrounded Hoxne and Edmund was seized. They bound him naked to a tree, and cruelly scourged him with whips. But they could not make him deny his religion nor accept their terms. After a while they grew weary of the attempt. So they took bows, and made him, like S. Sebastian, a target for their arrows. And Edmund stood riddled through and through with wounds, until at last their brutality was ended by a swordstroke which severed his head.[1]

The lesson of S. Edmund's martyrdom is admirably summed up in the words of one of the most recent students of his career—

"After all, though myths have gathered around his memory and little of authentic fact can be discerned, we cannot be wrong in holding Edmund to have been a just ruler and a strong-souled Christian man, who deliberately preferred to die rather than lead a life to which his Maker had not called him, and for which he found no warrant in his conscience. For him, the simple spontaneous *first* thought held good throughout, and no treacherous paralyzing *second* thought was allowed to move him."[2]

[1] A.D. 870.

[2] "Memorials of S. Edmund's Abbey," T. Arnold. Rolls Series vol. i. p. 20.

We owe the narrative of S. Edmund's martyrdom—for martyrdom indeed it may be justly called, since he died for his faith as well as for his people—to the zeal of S. Dunstan.[1]

Dunstan had heard the story from Edmund's armour-bearer, then in decrepit old age, and Dunstan, in his turn, repeated it to Abbo, monk of Fleury in Burgundy, then on a visit to England. Abbo, on his return home, wrote the life of S. Edmund, sending to S. Dunstan for advice and criticism.[2] This "Life" is still preserved.[3] Its origin may serve to illustrate how long a period may elapse between the close of a life and its perfectly authentic narrative. From Edmund's death to Abbo's work is at least a hundred years; yet Abbo had it from Dunstan's lips, and Dunstan from an eye-witness.

[1] See May 19. [2] A.D. 985.
[3] "Memorials of Dunstan," p. 578.

November 22

S. Cæcilia

CÆCILIA, a Christian lady at Rome about the year A.D. 230, was, very greatly against her will, given by her parents in marriage to Valerian, a heathen. She spent the time before her marriage in fasting and prayer. She told Valerian her faith, and persuaded him to go to Urban, the bishop, who taught him the Catholic religion, and baptized him. The convert and his wife lived as brother and sister together; and these two, rejoicing in their common conviction, resolved by the grace of God to extend the circle of the Faith, and to begin with their own relatives and friends. Cæcilian told the Faith to Valerian's brother Tiburtius; but Tiburtius was unconvinced. Valerian urged him to visit Urban, and hear for himself.

"Urban!" echoed Tiburtius, in horror. "Do you mean that Urban whom the Christians call their pope, and who has been twice condemned, and who, if he is discovered, will certainly be burnt alive; a fate which we too should share, if we were found associated with him, and so while seeking a Divinity concealed in heaven, we should rather encounter the fires which are kindled on earth?"

"If this were the only life," said Cæcilia, "we should indeed justly fear to lose what we possess. But since there is another life far better, which can never end, why should we fear to lose the transient to obtain the eternal?"

Tiburtius answered, "I have never heard of another life than this."

"This life which we now experience in the world is full of sorrow and pain, moving onward into shadows, and terminating in death; it passes away as if it had never been. But that life is, to the good, eternal, glorious, and full of rejoicing."

Tiburtius said wistfully, "Who is there that ever came to us from thence?"

Then Cæcilia told Tiburtius of the Incarnation of the Divine Personality in human form. She told him the story of the Sacred Life, and Passion, and Resurrection, and return to heaven; and how the gospel message was proclaimed by Apostles to all the world.

Tiburtius was deeply moved, and asked that he might be permitted to interview Pope Urban. Valerian took him. Tiburtius was instructed, convinced, converted, and baptized.

Meantime Almachius, prefect of the city, daily arrested believers in Christ, and added to the number of martyrs. He refused the last rites to the dead, and ordered their bodies to be thrown out unburied. Accordingly Tiburtius and Valerian imposed upon themselves this labour; and, in spite of the prefect's orders, they buried the martyrs. And soon Tiburtius and Valerian were denounced and arrested, and brought before the prefect's tribunal.

"How is it that men like yourselves, noble and illustrious by birth, should make yourselves ignoble and wretched for the sake of some worthless superstition? I hear that you have given the honour of burial to degraded creatures who suffered punishment for their wickedness; that you have incurred suspicion of being associated in the same delusions with them."

"Would that we were worthy to be servants to those of whom you suspect us of being associates! For they despised what seems to be, but is not, and found what seems not to be, but is," said Tiburtius.

"What is that," asked the prefect, "which seems to be and is not?"

"The world," replied Tiburtius.

"What is that which seems not to be, but is?"

"It is the life everlasting," said Tiburtius.

"Your brother is insane," said the prefect to Valerian. "You, doubtless, can answer me more coherently."

"You cannot understand, for you know not the drift of our words," said Valerian.

"It is yourselves who cannot understand," retorted Almachius—"you who have despised what is sweet, and make nothing of happiness, and embrace what is ruinous to your prospects. Either sacrifice to the gods, and depart unharmed, or you shall die in bitterness."

"These are no gods," they answered. "We offer sacrifice daily to God."

"Who is this God to Whom you say you offer your sacrifice?"

"Who is God but the Lord? or is there any God beside our God?" solemnly answered the brethren.

"What is His Name?" asked Almachius.

"He has no Name but God," replied Valerian.

"Then Jupiter is not the name of God?" asked Almachius.

"It is the name of an adulterer," replied Valerian. "How can you name him God? he only can be God Who is morally perfect."

"Then the whole world is wrong, and you and your brother know the one true God," said Almachius.

Then Almachius ordered Valerian to be beaten with rods. But Valerian rejoiced to be considered worthy to suffer for His Name's sake. While the lictors stripped and bound him, he said, "This is the hour for which I have longed and waited. Citizens of Rome," he added, in the midst of his sufferings, "let not these sufferings keep you back from the Truth; stand firm in the Faith."

Almachius was reluctant to sentence the two young noblemen to death. But his advisers counselled prompt action; for otherwise their entire wealth would be distributed to the poor, and there would be nothing left for the magistrate to seize. Moved by this consideration, Almachius ordered that Valerian and Tibertius should be led out on the Appian Way to the Temple of Jupiter, where for the last time the alternative of death or sacrifice should be offered them. If they refused to honour their country's gods, they were to be beheaded on the spot. The sequel needs no relating. On the Appian Way the two brothers won the martyr's crown.

Cæcilia was too well known in Rome for her faith to be unobserved. It was inevitable that she should be

ordered to make some act of reparation to the pagan divinities. But Almachius hesitated. He had no desire to shed the blood of one whose graces made her widely reverenced. He attempted a compromise; he sent his officers to Cæcilia's house to induce her to make in private some recognition of the pagan divinities whereby the magistrates might acquit her, and the dignity of the law be maintained. Cæcilia received the proposal with firmness and dignity. She was prepared to die, but not to compromise her faith. It is said that the officers wept. The prefect saw now no alternative but to summon her to answer for her apostasy. Still he shrank from the odium of condemning her. At least, she should not die before the crowds. She was imprisoned in her own house. Soon it was known that Cæcilia was dead—she had been stifled in the baths.[1]

The connection of S. Cæcilia's name with music and harmony is said to be due to Pope Paschal, who built and endowed a monastery by the Church of S. Cæcilia in order that the praises of God should be sung day and night perpetually round the tomb of the martyred saint.

[1] A.D. 230.

November 23

S. Clement

THE name of S. Clement does not stand out among the Bishops of Rome in virtue of recorded martyrdom or biographical detail, but for the sake of the letter written by him to the Church at Corinth. Clement's letter is one of the most precious relics of the Apostolic age; it was written after the death of S. Paul, but before the death of S. John.

S. Clement's letter to the Corinthians is an appeal in behalf of unity. It was, as we know, not the first appeal made to them on that subject. Their condition as a Church had called for earnest rebuke in the days of S. Paul. Three, if not four, distinct parties existed then in the Church of Corinth, threatening its unity and hindering its spiritual advancement. The party cries of Corinth seem to set the Apostle's teeth on edge. "I am of Paul," cried some—that is, adherents to the original master-builder and founder of that Church. "I am of Apollos," cried others, fascinated by the eloquence and power of the gifted Alexandrian. "I am of Cephas," a third party exclaimed, clinging unduly to their Hebrew antecedents, and requiring fulfilment of Hebrew rules as a condition for one who would

be truly a Christian. "I am of Christ," asserted others, apparently ignoring Apostolic authority.

It is obvious that a Church in that condition was liable at any moment to advance from inward discord to outward separation. And just at this critical period S. Paul wrote them his appeal for unity. "Whereas there is among you envying, and strife, and divisions, are ye not carnal, and walk as men?"[1] He marks here the three stages in the development of schism: envy—the inner passion; strife—its outward expression; schism—its completed work. And he warns them, whatsoever stage of the process they might have reached, to arrest the further growth of the evil. He asks them indignantly, "Is Christ divided? was Paul crucified for you?"

That was written before A.D. 60. Thirty-five years later discord was still prevailing. The form of the difficulty had changed, but the animating spirit was the same. Paul and Apollos and Cephas had long since passed away; but the temper which made their names a pretext for division was as active as ever. A few reckless, ambitious young men had revolted from the older clergy, withdrawn from their obedience, and apparently intruded themselves into an office which did not belong to them. This evil state of affairs was nothing new, and its effect upon the Church was paralyzing and ruinous. Such, then, was the lamentable disorder at Corinth about A.D. 95.[2]

It was the time when Domitian's persecution was adding in Rome many to the noble army of martyrs. The Church where S. Clement presided as bishop felt the full force of the storm, in virtue of their nearness to the imperial power.

[1] 1 Cor. iii. 3. [2] Cf. Gore, "Church and Ministry," p. 310.

During an interval of suspense, pale from prison and agony, and bereaved of some among her noblest sons, the Church in the Roman city turned its gaze to the envy and strife and division at Corinth, and wrote through its bishop the noble letter known as S. Clement's Epistle to the Corinthians. There is not the least shadow of doubt that S. Clement wrote it, although his name does not occur upon its pages, the salutation running, "The Church of God which dwells at Rome to the Church of God which dwells at Corinth." But the unanimous verdict of antiquity, without one solitary hesitation, fixes the authorship upon S. Clement as a thing of certainty. To doubt it would be to involve all early history in universal scepticism; for, as the greatest modern English authority upon it—Bishop Lightfoot—has said, "very few writings of classical or Christian antiquity are so well authenticated as this letter."[1]

So far as to the event which caused the letter. We come now to consider what does the letter contain?

S. Clement draws a touching contrast between the present disordered condition of Corinth and their state at the first. In their first glad enthusiastic reception of the Cross they had clung to their Lord and to one another with a strength of faith and tenacity of purpose which won for them the admiration of their brethren from afar. Each in his own order, bound by love and restrained by humility, had done his part to the edifying of the Body of Christ. They were inwardly filled with His doctrine, and His sufferings were before their eyes.[2]

But now all this was changed. Jeshurun had waxed fat, and kicked.[3] The worthless had risen against the honoured,

[1] Cf. Lightfoot, Ep. Clem. vol. i. p. 4. [2] Ibid., ch. ii.
[3] Ch. iii. Deut. xxxii. 15.

the obscure against the distinguished, the foolish against the wise, the young against the aged. They had abandoned the fear of God, become spiritually blind, rejected Divine ordinances. Brother rose against brother. Bitterness, self-will, envy, and strife made havoc of the Church's unity. Schism and disorder reigned supreme. Certain clergy of blameless life had been driven out of office, and the very unbelievers, gazing on the scandal of disunion, had scorned the Faith and blasphemed the Holy Name.

The question of schism has haunted the Church all down the ages. Let us hear how a disciple of the Apostles, with their words still ringing in his ears and their actions still visible in immediate results before his eyes, dealt with this sore, heartrending difficulty.

I.

What, then, is S. Clement's teaching on the Unity of the Church of Christ?

1. S. Clement begins with the *analogies* of nature; they are three—the material world, social life, and the human frame.

First, then, he takes a broad and magnificent survey of the material world. What impression as to unity does God's work in nature make upon the mind? Certainly God is not the Author of confusion; He is the source of order, harmony, peace. The characteristic of order and subordination is imprinted on all His works. The heavens revolving under His directing influence move in peaceful submission to His will. Day and night perform their Divinely appointed course. They clash not one with

another. Sun and moon and starry host sweep on in undeviating way, within the bounds His wisdom has assigned them. The fruitful earth, with unfailing regularity, brings its produce to the service of the living. The sea cannot pass beyond the limit imposed upon it ages ago—"hitherto shalt thou come, and no further; and here shall thy proud waves be stayed."[1]

Order and subordination, then, are the notes of the material world.

And in the *social* world it is the same. Without submission to law, social life becomes impossible. The organization of the Roman army is its most perfect expression. All are not generals in the host; all are not in command of a thousand, nor of a hundred, nor of fifty men. The great cannot live without the small, nor the small without the great. And the differences of order are to mutual advantage.

So it is in the *human frame.* Every member of the body is subordinate, yet useful. The body cannot dispense with the members, nor the members with the body.[2]

These are Clement's three analogies from nature—material, military, physical. Upon every one of them is impressed the rule of order and submission. What is the inference? Obviously that order and subordination should be found in the spiritual sphere as well as in the natural. Clement leaves the disorderly Corinthians to reflect upon the inference that God, Who abhors confusion in nature, will certainly not approve it in religion.

2. From these analogies of nature Clement advances to *analogies in religion.* There is the Divinely ordered system

[1] S. Clem., ch. xx. [2] Ibid., xxxvii.

of the Hebrew people. There, every one had his assigned position. The sacrifice must be offered by the proper persons (the priests), and at the proper place (upon the altar). Each order in that hierarchy had his separate functions, he was limited within bounds which he might not pass. High priest, priest, and Levite were all in their special place, and the layman also had his special place assigned him.[1]

Undoubtedly for that ordered system in religion there was some prevailing reason. And if we may ask why these spiritual functions were created, S. Clement will answer that it was done to maintain unbroken unity.

Unity was the object held in view. Care is taken to ensure for the Hebrew priesthood a perpetual undisturbed succession. After the schism of Korah, Moses determines for ever the vexed question of ministerial office. Twelve rods, each bearing the name of a tribe, were laid up in the Tabernacle before the Lord; and the decision was unmistakable when it was seen that Aaron's rod had budded.[2]

3. From Jewish analogies S. Clement advances to the facts about the Christian Church.

Order, and mission, and subordination are seen in the Church's origin. Christ Himself was sent from God. That was His mission. The Apostles were sent from Jesus Christ. Observe the subordination—God, Christ, the Apostles. Everything was orderly, and in harmony with the Divine Will. Commissioned by our Lord in Person, the Apostles in their turn commissioned others,[3] and in doing this certainly acted in accordance with the Divine Mind. Traversing the earth from city to city, they

[1] S. Clem., cxl. [2] Numb. xvii. S. Clem., xliii. [3] Ibid., xlii.

selected suitable men from the firstfruits of their labours, and appointed them to be bishops and deacons. Just as Moses took precautions to secure an orderly and peaceful succession to the ministry, so did the Apostles.[1] The action was similar, the motive the same. "Our Apostles knew by our Lord Jesus Christ that contentions would arise concerning the ministry. And therefore, knowing this, they appointed men, as we have already said, and then set down a list of their successors,[2] so that when they should have fallen asleep, other chosen and approved men should succeed in their ministry."

From this statement of the facts about the Church as the Apostles ordered it, S. Clement passes to the obvious conclusion which he proceeds to enforce upon the Corinthian mind.

"Wherefore we cannot think that those may be justly ejected from their ministry who were appointed by them, or afterwards chosen by other eminent men with the consent of the whole Church, and who have in all lowliness and innocency ministered to the flock of Christ in peace, and without self-interest, and have been for a long time commended by all. For it would be no small sin in us to cast out of the ministry those who holily and without blame offer the oblation. . . . But we see how ye have ejected some who were well conducted from the ministry which they adorned by their innocence."[3]

II.

Next to S. Clement's doctrine of Unity may be placed what he has to say on *the causes of division.*

[1] S. Clem. xliii. [2] Ibid., xliv. [3] Ibid., xliv.

To S. Clement's mind the causes of division are chiefly moral. "It is just and right, brethren, that we should obey God rather than follow men whom pride has made leaders in schism."[1]

According to S. Clement, then, the cause of division is *pride*. The tendency to separation is born of exaggerated self-esteem. It was begun by a few "rash and self-confident persons."[2] He repeats the same two factors mentioned by S. Paul, "envy and strife," and he declares that they "lead to death."[3] He implores them to lay aside all haughtiness, and pride, and foolishness, and angry feelings.[4]

He calls them to the cultivation of two peculiarly Christian virtues—the one is *humility*, the other *love*. Without the virtue of humility it is impossible to heal disunion, or, still more, to prevent it. Humility is the corrective of our ignorant self-regard. Humility is, after all, the true estimate of self, and that is what the Corinthians need.[5] This virtue S. Clement urges by appeal to Bible precept, saintly examples, and, above all, the character of Jesus Christ.

Writing to a Church which we know to have been conspicuous for learning, energy, and spiritual gifts, he recalls the words, "Thus saith the Lord, Let not the wise man glory in his wisdom, neither let the mighty man glory in his might, let not the rich man glory in his riches; but let him that glorieth glory in the Lord."[6] Let them consider the great *examples* of humility—Job, when he abhorred himself in dust and ashes; David, when he sang the fifty-first

[1] S. Clem., xiv. [2] Ibid., i. [3] Ibid., ix. [4] Ibid., xiii.
[5] Ibid., xvii. [6] Jer. ix. 23; S. Clement, xiii.

psalm. Let them remember that humility is a characteristic whereby men who have received the Lord's benediction are invariably to be known. "Christ is theirs who are humble, not theirs who exalt themselves over His flock." [1] And the Sacred Redeemer, though He were the very "sceptre of the majesty of God," came not in glory and power, but in lowliness, humiliation, and contempt, the reproach of men, and the outcast of the people. That is the pattern life. "If the Lord were so humble-minded, what should we be, who are brought under the yoke of His grace?" [2] Therefore let the Corinthian cultivate humility.

With humility there must also be *love*. Remember that S. Clement is writing to the Church for which S. Paul penned that most sublime twelfth chapter on love.

"Let him that hath love in Christ fulfil the commandments of Christ. Who can declare the bond of the love of God? Who is sufficient to tell the majesty of its beauty? The light whereunto love exalteth is unspeakable. Love joineth us unto God; love covereth a multitude of sins; love endureth all things. There is nothing coarse, nothing arrogant in love. Love hath no divisions, love maketh no seditions, love doeth all things in concord. In love were all the elect of God made perfect; without love nothing is well pleasing to God; in love the Master took us unto Himself; for the love which He had towards us, Jesus Christ our Lord hath given His Blood for us by the will of God, His flesh for our flesh, and His life for our lives. Ye see, dearly beloved, how great and marvellous a thing is love, and there is no declaring its perfection." [3]

[1] S. Clem., xii. [2] Ibid., xvi. [3] Ibid., xlix.

Founded on these ruling thoughts, S. Clement's letter abounds in most earnest exhortations to unity. He tells them that "it is just and right to obey God rather than follow men whom pride has made leaders in schism."[1] To surrender to the will of men who promote strife and contention would be the gravest peril. In a beautiful and striking passage full of reminiscences of Scripture teaching the writer says—

"Why should strife and anger, and division and schism be found among us? Have we not all one God and one Christ? Is not one spirit of grace poured out upon us all? Have we not one calling in Christ? Why, then, rend the members of Christ, and raise enmity against our own body, and ignore that we are members one of another? Remember the words of the Lord Jesus, for He said, 'Woe to that man by whom offences come: it were better for him that he had never been born than that he should have offended one of Mine elect. It were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and he should be cast into the sea, than that he should offend one of My little ones.' Your schism has perverted many, has discouraged many, thrown many into doubt, and all of us into grief, and yet it continues to prevail."

The writer was obviously thinking of S. Paul's words to the Ephesians.

Then S. Clement enforces his earnest pleading against disunion by appealing to the writings of one whom the Corinthians were practically bound to revere—even to him who had the right to say to this very Church, "Though ye have ten thousand instructers in Christ, yet have ye

[1] Ch. xiv.

not many fathers: for in Christ Jesus I have begotten you through the gospel."[1] "Take up," says S. Clement, "the Epistle of the blessed Paul the Apostle. What did he say to you in the beginning of his letter? Certainly he wrote to you by the Holy Ghost when he warned you not to make divisions about himself and Cephas and Apollos. For even then you had made parties and divisions among yourselves. . . . It is shameful, beloved, it is very shameful, and beneath the dignity of your Christian profession, that it should be reported of the faithful and long-founded Church of Corinth, it has revolted against its clergy. Yet this report has reached not us alone, but men who are against us. So that the Name of the Lord is blasphemed through your folly, and ye yourselves are brought into danger by it. Let us, therefore, with all haste take away this cause of offence."[2]

S. Clement further appeals to examples of men who sacrificed themselves for the sake of peace, for the good of a people, for the safety of a kingdom. He reminds the Corinthians that some have voluntarily endured exile rather than by remaining endanger their country's peace. Some had placed upon themselves the chains of servitude in order to set others free. Women have sacrificed themselves as well as men. He bids them recall Judith and Holofernes, Esther and Haman. The same temper should animate Christians also. They who live in love and fear will endure personal privations rather than see the Church's peace disturbed. A true leader like Moses will identify himself with the interests of his people. His noble nature refused to rise upon their ruin. His

[1] 1 Cor. iv. 15.

[2] S. Clem., xlvii.

inspired petition was, Forgive them, or else let me share their punishment. Let this be an example for Christians when the Church's unity is imperilled.

"Who is there among you that is generous, who that is compassionate, who that is loving? Let him say, If this division and strife be on my account, I am ready to depart and go whithersoever you please; only let the flock of Christ be in peace with the priests who are set over it."[1]

It is a very curious example of precarious survival that the letter of S. Clement, although highly valued in the early Church, came to our own days in an imperfect form. It was known to be imperfect, a page having been torn away from the manuscript in which it survived. Quotations from the missing section were found in early writers, but not enough to piece together or to explain the character of the portion omitted. It was not until 1875 that the letter was found in its completeness. About a tenth part of the work was then restored.

The portion recovered consists almost entirely of prayer. The writer lays aside argument and entreaty, and calls upon the Corinthians as he would his own congregation at Rome, to approach the throne of God in prayer. Prayer was the most effective means of restoring them to the Christian temper. The causes of alienation would assume a different aspect when regarded in the light of adoring devotion before the Throne.

One most striking feature of Clement's prayers ought not to be passed by in silence. It is his pleading for the rulers of the nation. Bear in mind that the ruler at that moment on the imperial throne was the capricious and

[1] S. Clem., liv.

cruel Domitian. Quite recently Domitian had broken out furiously against the Christian Faith, put to death his own cousin, and banished the wife for their Christianity. Certainly the Roman Church had no cause to feel well-disposed to the secular power. Even the letter of Clement itself was probably written not after persecution had altogether ceased, but during a momentary suspense, while they knew not when or where or how the anger of this capricious tyrant might fall upon them. And yet what is the tone of Clement's prayer? In reference to Domitian, Clement says—

"Thou, Lord and Master, hast given them the power of sovereignty, that we, knowing the glory and honour Thou hast given them, may submit ourselves unto them, in nothing resisting Thy Will. Grant, therefore, unto them, O Lord, health and peace, concord and stability, that they may administer aright the government which Thou hast given them. Do Thou, O Lord, direct their counsel according to Thy Will, that, administering in peace and gentleness with godliness the power which Thou hast given them, they may obtain Thy favour." [1]

Now, reflecting upon the circumstances in which that prayer was written—the storm without, the character of the heathen secular power, and its attitude towards Jesus Christ and all who bore His Name and strove after His ideals—the prayer is indeed "truly sublime—sublime in its utterances, and still more sublime in its silence." [2]

It has been well said that this great ecclesiastical prayer of the Roman Church, "involuntarily awakens admiration for the moral greatness and Christian fervour which are

[1] S. Clem., lxi. Lightfoot, Appendix, p. 377. [2] Ibid., p. 269.

here expressed, and enables us to see that a power lay hidden here, against which even the power of the Roman Empire could do nothing." [1]

The personality of Clement shines out all through. He has none of the keen irony, the penetrating sarcasm of S. Paul—that weapon so deadly unless sanctified, as it was in the Apostle, by the highest spiritual grace—Clement has none of this, but he has the Pauline love. It is a personality distinguished for sweet reasonableness. He reminds you of the lines—

> "There are in this loud stunning tide
> Of human care and crime,
> With whom the melodies abide
> Of th' everlasting chime."

"His characteristic is especially a soul full of harmony." [2]

The tone of Clement's letter is altogether admirable. When it is remembered that the writer has only just issued from a fiery persecution, and that he is writing to fierce disputants, the calm and dignity of his letter, the entire absence of anything exaggerated or fanatical, is wonderful and beyond all praise. It breathes the pure apostolic spirit. It is humble yet authoritative, gentle yet strong, firm yet persuasive, and calculated to win—not likely, even in its severest utterances, reasonably to offend. It is the language of a peacemaker, a veritable eirenicon, a model of controversial writing.

The letter of S. Clement was received by the Corinthians in a manner appropriate to the spirit in which it was

[1] Luthardt, "Christian Ethics," p. 120.
[2] Dorner, "Person of Christ," i. 96.

written. Its lofty ethical teaching largely contributed to allay their bitterness, and thereby to restore the Church to unity. Years afterwards it was still treasured among the most precious and honoured possessions of that city, and publicly read in church, together with the letters of S. Paul. It is found to this day in a manuscript of the New Testament. It was widely known and esteemed beyond the limits of the Church to which it was directed and the quarrel for which it was intended, and is frequently quoted by the leading teachers of the West.

November 25

S. Catherine

WHAT is generally told about S. Catherine is derived from two sources: (1) a well-known passage in the historian Eusebius, which is generally supposed to refer to this saint, although no name is given; (2) a biography which in its present form was written in the East seven hundred years after she was dead—from what source derived we do not know; but much of it is plainly legendary, and so difficult to reconcile with the earlier narrative that great historians such as Baronius have doubted its authenticity.

"It is better," says Baronius,[1] "to have few details, provided they are true, in the lives of martyrs and saints than to accumulate uncertainties. It is more conducive to real knowledge of the Church to pass by in silence what is not well assured, rather than to mingle falsehood with truth. For while the mind dwells only on what is fact, the picture realized by the imagination, however incomplete, is true; but where fiction enters in, nothing remains secure, and doubt is even thrown on what is true."

[1] Baronius, "Annals," A.D. 307, No. 33.

It may be best to give separately the statement of Eusebius, and then the fuller but later narrative.

Eusebius says that the tyrant Maximin, in his shameless career, set his eyes on a most distinguished Christian lady in Alexandria. She was honourable for her wealth, her family, and her education, but above all these things she esteemed her faith. Maximin urged her many times to abandon her ideals, but in vain. He would not put her to death, for his desire was stronger than his anger. He therefore punished her with exile, and confiscated her possessions.[1]

This is all that the early historian has recorded of the lady at Alexandria, whom he does not name. But to these meagre facts the biographer, seven hundred years later, adds an ample, if somewhat legendary and contradictory, narrative. He says that when the Emperor Maxentius issued a decree ordering universal sacrifice to the pagan divinities, multitudes hastened to comply with the imperial command. But Catherine, a lady of Alexandria, distinguished for her piety and birth and learning in literature both sacred and profane, sought an interview with Maxentius, and expostulated with him on the irrational character of paganism. Maxentius summoned fifty of his most learned philosophers to refute Catherine's objections, but none of them could answer her. Whereupon the emperor ordered them to be put to death. But, fascinated by the beauty and eloquence of Catherine, Maxentius offered to share his kingdom with her on the sole condition that she would share his religion. But Catherine preferred martyrdom with Christ rather than a throne without Him.

[1] Euseb., "H. E.," viii. 14.

Finding entreaty unavailing, the baffled emperor, in his rage, ordered Catherine to be severely scourged with whips of oxhide. Then, bleeding from head to foot, she was cast into prison. Then a strange story follows, relating how the empress came to visit the woman who for her religion refused a throne, and how she herself became converted and was martyred. Then Catherine was sentenced to be torn to pieces upon the knife-set edges of revolving wheels; but the instrument of death was broken. Finally Catherine died by the sword.

December 6

S. Nicolas

THE name of S. Nicolas achieved immense popularity throughout the Middle Ages all over Christendom. It is said that in England alone three hundred and seventy-six churches are dedicated to his memory.[1] Nor was he less regarded elsewhere. His name stands in the Calendar of Constantinople as "Our Father Nicolas, Bishop of Myra in Lycia, the wonder-worker."[2]

He is the theme of panegyric and the object of invocation. Few names were more constantly on men's lips in mediæval times. If it lightened and stormed, men called on Nicolas as their protector. If anxiety befell them, if trouble crossed their way, it was Nicolas who was summoned to relieve their difficulties. So taught S. Peter Damian.[3]

But when we turn from the language of praise to ask for the solid facts upon which this universal veneration was based, it is painful to find that they have not survived to modern days. There are, indeed, the picturesque, romantic legends with which a later Greek writer, centuries afterwards, adorned his memory, but they are evidently

[1] Wace, "Dict. Biog." [2] Neale, Introd., 785.
[3] S. Peter Damian, Sermon 59.

rather the popular tales, the folklore, than the solid record of sober history, if indeed they were ever meant to be read as history. The Roman Breviary contains to this day the story how Nicolas as an infant fasted every Wednesday and Friday in his cradle.

So far as the life of Nicolas can be now recovered, he was born apparently between 250 and 300 A.D. in Patara, a Lycian town on the Mediterranean opposite the island of Rhodes. His parents were both pious and exemplary, and took immense pains to educate their son, and, above all things, to train him in the Faith. The boyhood of S. Nicolas is said to have been studious and solitary; he was much older in thought than he was in years. Both his parents died while he was still quite young, being swept away in the plague which half depopulated the district of Lycia. In due time he became a priest, and more than fulfilled the religious promise of his youth. The solemnity of the office of priesthood he profoundly realized. "The higher a tree exalts its boughs toward heaven," says his biographer, "the deeper must it strike its roots into the ground. So the elevation of his office as a priest seemed to Nicolas to demand all the deeper foundations of self-discipline and study and devotion. He was abstemious both in sleep and food and wine, often contented with water alone."

The young priest was placed in charge of a church dedicated by the name of Sion, and became head of a religious community. He spent a considerable sum in providing marriage portions for the three daughters of a poor man, to save them from the terrible temptations to a dissolute life with which their father's grinding poverty

threatened them. Nicolas did his utmost to prevent his good deeds from being known. But he could not conceal his goodness, nor were men slow to discover and revere it. For a time he withdrew himself, even from his community, by a pilgrimage to the Holy Land; but after his return to Patara he was summoned to become Bishop of the Church of Myra. Henceforth his life was no longer manifest only to the few, but to all men. In the early days of his episcopal work at Myra broke out the Diocletian persecution. Nicolas suffered a long imprisonment, but the advent of Constantine to the throne opened the prison doors, and the people of Myra received back their bishop as from the other world, a martyr in will, if not in deed.

When the edict of toleration was issued by Constantine at Milan, in A.D. 313, the Churches were free to labour unimpeded, and henceforward the life of Nicolas was one of incessant toil. He was remembered for his simplicity of manners, his refusal of everything costly in his episcopal house. He had practically no possessions. Even the books he read were borrowed. He took food but once in the day, and that in the evening. He was always accessible to all men, even at his meals, which were of the simplest kind. He avoided animal food, and had but one dish, except when receiving strangers. He rejoiced in the companionship of learned and pious priests, and had much influence with the educated women of Myra, and set them to the duties of charity, to care for those in prison, the sick and the poor.

One great distinction ascribed to Nicolas by his biographers is that he was one of the three hundred and

eighteen Fathers of the Council of Nicæa. In itself this would be natural, for Myra was not very far distant from the city of the first General Council. But when we turn to the list of signatures, the name of the Bishop of Myra is not to be found.[1]

It would seem that Nicolas lived on to extreme old age among his people. To quote the Greek biographer, "fragrant as a lily among the gardens of Myra"—so was his saintly example. And there in perfect quietness he passed away. The Roman Breviary, however, denies him this length of years, and says that he departed shortly after the condemnation of Arius at Nicæa.

S. Nicolas has been regarded as the patron of children. The curious custom of arraying a boy in episcopal robes on the festival of S. Nicolas, and allowing him to preach and even give the blessing, prevailed in many churches, but finally disappeared at the Reformation.

[1] Mansi, "Councils," vol. ii.

December 8

Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary

IT must ever be pathetic to Christian minds that a festival instituted for the increase of piety should become a ground of contention. But if the significance of the festival has drifted from its original intention, or if the meaning assigned to it in the East differs from that ascribed to it in the West, then controversy becomes almost inevitable. Since 1864 it has been an article of faith in the Roman Communion that Mary was from the first instant she was conceived preserved free from all taint of original guilt. In no part of Christendom was the Immaculate Conception regarded until that year as anything more than a pious opinion—an opinion which for many centuries had divided the accredited theologians of the Church into its opponents and its advocates.

To the Anglican mind the history of the dogma of Mary's exemption from original sin is like that of the papal infallibility, a singularly instructive proof that doctrinal development on *a priori* grounds may finally produce logical and consistent theories wanting in nothing except confirmation in fact.

1. The teaching of the Early Fathers on the Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary may best be illustrated from the greatest teacher of the West, S. Augustine. When writing on the subject of actual sin S. Augustine deliberately places the Virgin apart, and refuses, for the honour of our Lord, to bring her into the discussion.[1] When, however, he discusses the doctrine of original sin, Augustine makes no corresponding exception of the Blessed Virgin Mary. Not only does he teach in general terms that the sole exception to the inheritance of evil is found in Him Who was born of a Virgin, but he also teaches more expressly that the Virgin herself is not exempted from the universal law.[2] "Mary, who was of Adam, died for sin; Adam died for sin; and the flesh of the Lord, which was of Mary, died to put away sin."[3] Augustine's teaching is still more clear from his discussion of the two instances of Jeremiah and S. John the Baptist, both of whom are regarded in Scripture as sanctified previously to their birth.[4]

2. Most expressive is the passage in S. Peter Damian.[5] While enforcing the principle that the validity of a sacrament is not impeded by the unworthiness of the minister, he gives as illustration that the leprous hand does not spoil the seed sown, that goodly children have sprung from a doubtful origin; and then, as the crowning instance of all, cites Christ's birth from the Virgin. "From the flesh of the Virgin, which was conceived of sin,

[1] De Nat. and Grat., 42, p. 395. Works, vol. x.
[2] "De Gen. ad Litt.," bk. x. 18.
[3] S. Augustine, "Enar. Ps.," xxxiv. 342. Oxford trans., p. 393.
[4] Op. imperf. C. Julian, bk. iv. 134. Works, vol. x. p. 1946.
[5] A.D. 1007.

came forth the sinless Flesh which blotted out the sins of the flesh." [1]

In the Sacramental System and in the Incarnation alike S. Peter Damian finds the same principle working. In neither is the spiritual element compromised, although associated with the inferior and unworthy.

3. But the most famous of all patristic utterances upon this subject is, of course, S. Bernard's letter to the Canons of Lyons.

To quote a recent description of the letter:[2] "As S. Bernard points out, the doctrine is not one which the Fathers could have passed by with unanimous silence, if the doctrine had been true. It arose at Lyons in France, in the twelfth century; and the local festival which was begun in honour of it was greeted by S. Bernard as 'a presumptuous novelty—mother of rashness, sister of superstition, daughter of frivolity.' He complained that so respected a Church as that of Lyons should have 'allowed itself to be disfigured by such juvenile levity,' introducing what 'is unknown to Church practice, unapproved by reason, uncommended by ancient tradition.' 'The royal Virgin,' he said, 'had so many genuine honours that she stood in no need of spurious ones.' That she was sanctified in the womb, he held in common with most Catholic believers, and that she was preserved sinless throughout her life; but this did not of necessity prove her exempt from original sin. If the acknowledged sanctity of her birth depended on the sanctity of the antecedent

[1] S. Peter Damian, "Opusc.," vi. cap. xix. Works, iii. 115. "Ut sinistra principia ad faustos proveniant exitus."

[2] Mason, "Faith of the Gospel."

conception, it would be easy to go still further back, and argue for the immaculate conception of her parents, and of her grandparents, and of her great-grandparents. Her conception was confessedly in the natural order of things through the marriage union of her parents, and, as such, could not be free from the sin which now penetrates the whole working of the natural order. Indeed, S. Bernard thought it a strange mode of honouring the Blessed Virgin to teach that she was herself immaculately conceived, inasmuch as the credit of it would belong to another, not to her. It robbed her of the unique distinction which she possessed, by extending to her mother also the dignity of motherhood achieved without any compensating loss. Mary was no longer the only woman who had conceived, without sin. And, what was still more contrary to the Christian conscience, this novel doctrine took away a prerogative which belonged to Christ alone. 'The Lord Jesus alone,' says the saint, 'was conceived of the Holy Ghost, because He only was holy before His conception. He alone excepted, it holds true of all the rest of the children of Adam, what one of them confessed with as much truth as humility concerning himself, Behold, I was shapen in iniquity, and in sin hath my mother conceived me.'

"So S. Bernard reasoned. However much the Catholic might be inclined, as S. Bernard says was at first the case with him, to allow as a pious opinion what seemed to be suggested by love of our Lord's Mother, after-reflection shows that the opinion is not pious, but detracts from the fulness of Christ's Redemption. Not only does it make the Blessed Virgin herself exempt from original sin, and

therefore exempt from the common need of salvation; but, by so doing, it insulates our Lord Himself from direct touch with the sinful world. If it were true, the regeneration of humanity would begin, not with Him, but with her; and, instead of springing sinless out of the sinful race which He came to save, He would derive His humanity from something not like the rest of us. The doctrine would make His human sanctity, in a way, dependent upon hers, and a consequence of it. Thus the dogma of the immaculate conception of Mary, by its over-refinement, would put Christ at a distance from us, and mutilate the blessed fulness of the truth that He is the Son of Man, and that all we are His brethren." [1]

4. But, notwithstanding Bernard's emphatic protest, the festival continued to be observed, although not upon the ground for which he rejected it. For it is quite certain that in many places the festival was kept while the doctrine of her immaculate conception was denied. The great authority, both of S. Thomas Aquinas and of S. Bonaventura, was opposed to the new doctrine.

S. Thomas wrote, "It is erroneous to say that any one was conceived without original sin, our Lord excepted. For he who is conceived without sin needs no redemption. And thus Christ would not be the Saviour of all men."

And again, "The Blessed Virgin was conceived in original sin."

S. Bonaventura: "This mode of speaking is more common, and more reasonable, and safer: more common, because almost all hold that the Blessed Virgin had original sin; . . . more reasonable, because the being of

[1] Quoted from Mason, "Faith of the Gospel."

nature precedes the being of grace; safer, because it is more concordant with piety and the authority of the saints. It is more concordant with the authority of the saints, for the saints commonly, when they speak of this subject, except Christ alone from that universality wherewith it is said, 'all have sinned in Adam.' But there is no one found of those whom we have heard of with our ears, who said that the Virgin Mary was free from original sin. It is more concordant with piety, because, although the mother is to be had in reverence, and great devotion ought to be had towards her, yet much greater is to be had towards the Son, from Whom all honour and glory come to her."

When the festival was appointed by a synod in S. Paul's Cathedral in 1328 for observance in England it was upon grounds which S. Thomas Aquinas, S. Bonaventura, and the English Church to-day can cordially endorse and approve, namely, "because God ordained her conception to be the predestinated temporal origin of His Only-begotten Son, that by this means the remote dawnings of our salvation which rouse spiritual joy in pious minds might increase the devotion and salvation of all."[1]

The chief promoter, if not originator, of the doctrine of Mary's freedom from original sin was Duns Scotus, 1308. Scotus advocated the dogma on the ground that it is seemly to ascribe to Mary what is most excellent, if not contrary to the Church or Scriptures.[2] The great religious orders took opposite sides in the dispute, the Dominicans rejecting, the Franciscans advocating, the belief. Thus the question was argued and debated in universities. But gradually

[1] Wilkins, "Concilia," ii. 552. See also Hook, "Archbishops," iii. 499.
[2] Fleury, vol. xix. p. 144.

popularity increased on the Franciscan side. The controversy grew embittered and fierce. The peace of the Church was disturbed. Preachers on the one side went so far as to say that whosoever believed in the immaculate conception, or listened to a sermon in its favour, was committing a deadly sin.

These fierce contentions Pope Sixtus IV. attempted to restrain in 1487 by forbidding any to say that the belief in Mary's immaculate conception was a deadly sin. But the Pope dared not venture upon anything positive or dogmatic on either side.[1]

The same contentions reappeared in 1546 in the Council of Trent.

"The decrees asserted the transmission of original sin to the whole human race. Upon this Cardinal Pacheco proposed the following addition: that 'as regards the Blessed Virgin, the Council does not intend to define anything; although it is piously believed that she was conceived without original sin.' 'This opinion,' says a Roman writer on the Council of Trent, 'had a majority in its favour, but was opposed by all the bishops of the Dominican order, and by a few other prelates, as a deviation from the resolution not to condemn any opinion prevalent in the Church: for, as it seemed to them, to declare an opinion pious was indirectly to condemn the contrary as impious. It was at length, after much debate, agreed that the obnoxious words should be expunged.' All, then, that the Council of Trent effected upon this matter was to leave the subject undecided."[2]

[1] Baronius, 1483, n. 64.

[2] See "Lectures on the Life of S. Bernard," by the present writer.

For the Roman obedience the subject was, as has been already mentioned, determined by the act of Pius IX. in 1864.

The historic growth of this doctrine involves theories of development to which the Universal Church, as distinguished from the Roman obedience, is not committed. The English Church regards the sanctity of the Blessed Virgin as the Universal Church has always regarded it. It would not be difficult to gather from English theologians language expressing a profound conviction of Mary's freedom from actual sin. But, like S. Bernard, S. Thomas, and S. Bonaventura, not to mention many others among the saints, the English Church has no assurance that she was exempt from original sin. The English Church observes the Festival of the Conception as the Roman Church also observed it in days when Mary's freedom from original sin was legitimately both accepted and denied within the communion which kept that feast.

December 13

S. Lucy

THE scene of the martyrdom of S. Lucy is Sicily, the date probably 304, some fifty years after that of her countrywoman, S. Agatha.[1]

Lucy was of noble family in the town of Syracuse. She lost her father while very young, and was taught by her mother, Eutychia, the Christian Faith; but strangely, like Monica, was promised in marriage to a pagan.

But Lucy had already resolved to dedicate herself to virgin life. She obtained her mother's permission to sell her jewels and her inheritance, and to distribute the proceeds among the poor. When this came to the ears of the pagan youth who sought her in marriage, he denounced her to Paschasius, the pro-consul, as a Christian. Paschasius ordered her to offer sacrifice. She replied that she had done nothing else for some years, and had nothing left to offer except herself.

Paschasius told her that she might adopt this strain with her fellow-Christians, but that his standard was the imperial law. This was natural and true. All through the trials of the early saints, the martyr and the magistrate

[1] See Feb. 5.

move in different realms. The one is concerned with obedience to revealed religion, the other with obedience to the State. Religion commanded what the State forbade, and forbade what the State commanded. Hence conflict became inevitable; and, until the State yielded before a mighty conviction based on the Unseen, it could only strive to crush what it was helpless to subdue.

Paschasius was forced to condemn Lucy to death, but he determined first to subject her to a dreadful punishment; he delivered her to the mercy of the passions of the mob.

But she was wonderfully saved from the crowd, and, after being tortured, was stabbed to death with the sword. The name of S. Lucy occurs as one of the seven virgins commemorated in the Canon of the Mass.

December 31

S. Silvester

SILVESTER was born at Rome between A.D. 250 and 300. He proved his courage and his faith in early manhood by receiving in his own house a missionary from Antioch—a perilous generosity from which others shrank afraid. He sheltered his guest for more than a year, until the pagan authorities arrested the preacher, and silenced his voice in death. Silvester then took up the body and buried it. This act cost him his freedom, and he lay in the prison condemned. But that night the Roman prefect died, and through some political change Silvester regained his freedom. He was thus a confessor of the Faith, but was reserved for another destiny than martyrdom. Pope Miltiades ordained him deacon, and when Miltiades died in 314, Silvester succeeded him. These were the days of relief when Constantine cancelled the edicts of persecution, gave the Church the undoubted blessing of freedom to develop her worship according to her own mind unhindered, and also the more questionable advantage of his personal intervention in her proceedings. The year of Silvester's consecration saw the assembling of the Council of Arles, held to promote reunion between the African Church and the Donatist schism. It became the mission of Silvester to labour for unity. He did not attend the Great Council

of Nicæa in 325, being prevented by age; but he was represented by two priests.[1] According to the "Roman Martyrology," he was engaged in many holy labours, and died in peace. The date of his death is said to have been 335. He ruled the Roman Church for one and twenty years.

This is practically all that is known of Silvester's life.[2] A long and interesting narrative in the Greek mediæval biographer describes the efforts and the arguments of Silvester to convert the Jews in Rome. Expressions in the narrative betray a knowledge of phases of controversy which had not arisen in Silvester's days, and it is difficult to say what authority the narrative possesses. The later legends of the eleventh century have amplified the statements about Silvester, but not materially increased our knowledge of him. The famous story of the donation of Constantine—the story which tells how, in gratitude for restoring him from leprosy, the emperor made over to the Roman bishop and his successors the temporal dominion of Rome—was constantly appealed to throughout the Middle Ages; not, however, without occasional vigorous protest against the papal theories of which it was made the foundation. Dante, for example, although unable to challenge the historic reality of the story, boldly rejected the inference. "The dignity of the empire," said Dante, "was what Constantine could not alienate nor the Church receive."[3]

Historic criticism has confirmed what Dante wrote by relegating the story itself to the department of legend.

[1] Euseb., "V. Constant.," iii. 7. [2] See Surius.
[3] Dante, "De Monarchia," iii. 10.

Chronological List

First Century.

July 26	S. Anne	Palestine.
December 8	Conception of B. V. M.	Palestine.
September 8	Nativity of B. V. M.	Palestine.
July 22	S. Mary Magdalene	Palestine.
July 2	Visitation B. V. M.	Palestine.
August 29	S. John Baptist beheaded	Palestine.
August 7	Name of Jesus	Palestine.
August 6	Transfiguration	Palestine.
August 1	Lammas, S. Peter	Palestine.
May 6	S. John	Ephesus.
June 1	S. Nicomede	Rome.
November 23	S. Clement	Rome.

Third Century.

A.D.			
202	March 7	S. Perpetua	Africa.
230	November 22	S. Cæcilia	Rome.
250	January 20	S. Fabian	Rome.
251	February 5	S. Agatha	Sicily
258	August 10	S. Lawrence	Rome.
258	September 26	S. Cyprian	Africa.
268	January 18	S. Prisca	Rome.
270	February 14	S. Valentine	Rome.
273	October 9	S. Denys	France.
288	October 25	S. Crispin	France.
290	October 6	S. Faith	France.
? 300	July 20	S. Margaret	Asia Minor

Fourth Century.

A.D.			
303	January 22	S. Vincent	Spain (Saragossa).
?303	April 23	S. George	Cappadocia.
?303	June 17	S. Alban	England.
304	January 21	S. Agnes	Rome.
304	December 13	S. Lucy	Syracuse.
307	November 25	S. Catherine	Alexandria.
311	January 8	S. Lucian	Syria (Antioch)
316	February 3	S. Blasius	Asia Minor.
326	May 3	Invention of the Cross	Palestine.
335	December 31	S. Silvester	Rome.
340	September 7	S. Evurtius	Orleans.
342	December 6	S. Nicolas	Lycia.
368	January 13	S. Hilary	France.
397	April 4	S. Ambrose	Italy.
397	November 11	S. Martin	France.

Fifth Century.

420	September 30	S. Jerome	Palestine.
430	August 28	S. Augustine (bishop)	Africa.
444	November 13	S. Britius	France.

Sixth Century.

533	October 1	S. Remigius	France.
543	March 21	S. Benedict	Italy.
559	November 6	S. Leonard	France.
564	November 15	S. Machutus	Brittany.

Seventh Century.

601	March 1	S. David	Wales.
?604	March 12	S. Gregory	Rome.
?604	May 26	S. Augustine (archbishop)	England.
614	September 14	Exaltation of the Holy Cross	Palestine.
672	March 2	S. Chad	England.
679	October 17	S. Etheldreda	England.

Eighth Century.

709	September 17	S. Lambert	Maestricht.
724	September 1	S. Giles	France.
735	May 27	Ven. Bede	England
754	June 5	S. Boniface	Germany.

Ninth Century.

A.D.			
862	July 15	S. Swithun	England.
870	November 20	S. Edmund	England.

Tenth Century.

978	March 18	S. Edward	England.
988	May 19	S. Dunstan	England.

Eleventh Century.

1012	April 19	S. Alphege	England.
1066	October 13	Trans. Edw. Confessor	England.

Twelfth Century.

1200	November 17	S. Hugh	England.

Thirteenth Century.

1253	April 3	S. Richard	England.

List of Books

THE following list of books is compiled for the use of those who desire to study the life of any saint commemorated in the English Calendar:—

JAN. 8. S. LUCIAN.—Homily on S. Lucian by S. John Chrysostom, Works, ii. 626; Jerome; Catalogue of Eccles. Writers; Eusebius; Theodoret, H. E., i. 4, 5; Routh, Reliquiæ Sacræ, vol. i.—contains the actual words of Lucian's defence—certainly genuine; Roman Martyrology; Bede's Martyrology; Baronius, A.D. 311; Tillemont, v. 474; Bull, Defence Nic. F., ii. 724; Bollandists; Newman's Arians; Westcott, History of the Canon; Church Quarterly, No. 102.

JAN. 13. S. HILARY.—Life by Fortunatus; Life in Migne; Hilary's own Works; Sermon by S. Peter Damian; Tillemont, vii. 432; Cave, Lives of the Fathers, ii. 365; Wace, Bampton Lect., p. 308; Cazenove, Fathers for English Readers; Barbier, Vie de S. Hilary (1887); Gwatkin, Arian Controversy; Dorner, Person of Christ.

JAN. 18. S. PRISCA.—Acta Sanctorum; Butler; Bede's Martyrology; Roman Breviary Calendar, but no Office.

JAN. 20.—S. FABIAN.—Bede's Martyrology; Baronius, A.D. 250; Roman Martyrology; Freppel, S. Cyprien; Bp. Wordwortt, Miscellanies, i. 257; Archbishop Benson, S. Cyprian.

JAN. 21. S. AGNES.—S. Ambrose de Virginibus; S. Augustine, Serm. 273; Prudentius; Acta Sanctorum.

JAN. 22. S. VINCENT.—Genuine Acts of the Martyrdom in the Acta Sanctorum; Sermons by S. Augustine, 275–277; S. Leo; Hymns of S. Prudentius; Baronius, A.D. 303; Tillemont, vol. v.

FEB. 3. S. BLASIUS.—Account in Surius; Baronius, A.D. 316; Acta Sanctorum.

FEB. 5. S. AGATHA.—Acta in Surius; Acta Sanctorum; Bede's Martyrology.

FEB. 14. S. VALENTINE. Acta in Surius; Baronius, A.D. 270; Tillemont, vol. iv., copied in Butler.

March 1. S. David.—Haddan and Stubbs, Councils; Wharton, Anglia Sacra; Todd's S. Patrick; Collier, H. E., i. 135; Bevan, History of S. David's; Jones and Freeman, History of S. David's; Freeman, Norman Conquest, i. 349.

March 2. S. Chad.—Bede, Eccl. Hist.; Collier; Montalembert, Monks of the West, iv. 212; Warner, Life and Legend of S. Chad.

March 7. S. Perpetua.—Passion of S. Perpetua, see Migne, Patrology, vol. iii.; trans. in Ante Nic. Lib. (S. Cyprian); S. Augustine, Serm. 280. On S. Perpetua's prayer for her dead brother Dinocrates, see Aug. de Orig. Animæ, i. 10 and iii. 9, where he says, that Dinocrates suffered for sins committed after Baptism. See Life of S. Gregory Magn, Migne, p. 401; Church Quarterly, No. 63.

March 12. S. Gregory.—Works in Migne's Patrology; Life by Paul the Deacon, monk of Monte Cassino; Life by John the Deacon; Life in Migne (Benedictine); Bede, H. E.; see esp. Plummer's Edit. An excellent account in Herzog and Plitt, Encycl. für Theologie und Kirche, vol. v. pp. 364; Maimbourg, Histoire de S. Gregoire; Hodgkin, Italy and her Invaders; Montalembert, ii. 73–226; Church Quarterly, Nos. 82 and 85.

March 18. S. Edward. Matthew of Paris, Chron. Maj., vol. i.; Florence of Worcester; William of Malmesbury; Stubbs' Memorials of S. Dunstan, p. cii.; Hook, Lives of the Archbishops, i. 414; Collier, E. H., i. 466–470; Lappenberg, ii. 149.

March 21. S. Benedict.—Life by S. Gregory the Great; Montalembert, Monks of the West, ii. 3–72; Bossuet, Panegyric; Sermons of S. Peter Damian; Abbot Tosti, S. Benedict (1896).

April 3. S. Richard.—Life by Ralph his Confessor, in Bollandists; The Chroniclers—Matthew of Paris, Florence of Worcester, Nic. Trivet; Grosstete, Letters. Modern—Stephen's Memorials of Chichester; Wilfrid Wallace, Life of S. Edmund of Canterbury, p. 196 ff.; Dict. National Biogr.

April 4. S. Ambrose.—Works; Life by Paulinus, his secretary, written at the request of S. Augustine; Anonymous Life; Benedictine Life, collected from his writings. Modern—Cave, Lives of the Fathers; Life by Archdeacon Thornton; Life by Duc de Broglie (1899).

April 19.—S. Alphege.—Life by Osborne in Wharton, Anglia Sacra; The Chroniclers—Matthew of Westminster, Florence of Worcester, Roger de Hoveden (Rolls Series); Memorials of Dunstan; Collier; Freeman, Norman Conquest; Hook, Lives of the Archbishops.

April 23. S. George.—The Martyrologies of Bede and Roman; Sermons of S. Peter Damian; Coptic Legends, trans. by Dr. Budge (1888). Early rejection of the falsified Acts may be found in Spicilegium Solismense, iv. 391. The Acta are in Surius. Modern accounts, see Milner, Historical Inquiry into S. George (1792); Heylin, S. George, Dict. Eccles. Biogr.

May 3. Invention of the Cross.—Socrates, H. E., i. 17; S. Ambrose de Obit. Theod., p. 1400; Dict. Christ. Antiq. *s.v.* Cross.

May 6. S. John ante Portam Latinam.—Tertullian de Præscript., ch. 36; Eusebius; Preface (author unknown) to S. Augustine on S. John; Cave, Lives of the Apostles; Herzog and Plitt, Encycl., *s.v.* Johannes; Westcott, Introduction to S. John's Gospel, p. 34; Stanley, Apostolic Age.

May 19. S. Dunstan.—For the ancient documents, see Bishop Stubbs' Memorials of S. Dunstan, Rolls Series, which contains the original biographies. Modern accounts of the saint in Collier, E. H.; Lingard; Lappenberg; Hook, Lives of the Archbishops.

May 26. S. Augustine of Canterbury.—Bede, Eccles. Hist.; Collier; Montalembert, iii. 337–420; Haddan's Remains, 303 ff.; Bright, Early English Church History; Mason, Mission of S. Augustine; Bishop of Bristol, Lectures, S.P.C.K.; Père Brou, S. A. de C. (1898); Cutts, S. Augustine of Canterbury; Collins, Beginnings of English Christianity (1898).

May 27. Venerable Bede.—Works, ed. Giles, 12 vols.; editions of the History by Moberly, Stephenson, above all, by Plummer; Modern lives—Montalembert, v. 60–105; Bishop of Bristol, Venerable Bede; Green, Making of England; Dict. Eccles. Biogr.; Church Quarterly, Nos. 35 and 50.

June 1. S. Nicomede.—Acts of the Saints, by Surius; Tillemont, ii. 129.

June 5. S. Boniface.—Migne, Patrol. Lat., vol. 89; Dict. Eccles. Biogr. [In the present volume, p. 195, note, for "Bede" read "Migne."]

June 17. S. Alban.—Bede; Dict. Eccles. Biogr. (article by Haddan); Bright, Early English Church History. For the dispute about the relics between the monks of Ely and S. Albans, see Baronius, Annals, 1314 A.D., § 27.

July 15. S. Swithun.—The Chroniclers—Florence of Worcester, William of Malmesbury, Roger Hoveden; Baronius, A.D. 847 and 862.

July 20. S. Margaret.—Dict. Eccl. Biogr., *s.v.* Marina.

July 26. S. Anne.—A summary of the legends is given in Dict. Eccl. Biogr. In the notes by Baronius to the Roman Martyrology the early references to her are collected. The earliest mention of her name is apparently in S. Epiphanius, born about 310.

Aug. 1. Lammas Day.—In Bede's Martyrology the day is given as S. Peter ad Vincula, and also as the festival of the Maccabees. This last was evidently a favourite commemoration in Africa in the time of S. Augustine; see his Sermons.

Aug. 6. Transfiguration.—The subject will be found treated by S. Augustine, Serm. 78; Ven. Bede, Hom. 28, Works, ed. Giles, vol. vi. p. 200; Van. Mildert, Works, vol. vi. serm. 5; Godet, New Testament Studies; Trench, Studies in the Gospels; Bright, The Law of Faith.

Aug. 10. S. Lawrence.—See Serm. 303 of S. Augustine, and Tract 27

on S. John; Serm. 45 of S. Leo; S. Ambrose, Offic., i. 41, ii. 28; Serm. 135 of S. Peter Chrysologus; Tillemont, iv. 38.

Aug. 28. S. Augustine of Africa.—Contemporary Life by Possidius; Benedictine Life collected from his works; Works, 11 vols. folio. The literature is enormous. The chief works are mentioned in Harnack, History of Dogma. Among the best modern biographies are—in German, Bindeman, and Rausher; in French, Povjoulat. The English lives of S. Augustine are few. The account by Pressensé in that most invaluable work, the Dict. of Eccles. Biogr., is the best and most exhaustive. See also for his teaching, Cunningham's S. Austin; Cutts, S. Augustine; Bright, Lessons.

Sept. 1. S. Giles.—Acta Sanctorum; Dict. Eccles. Biogr., *s.v.* Ægidius.

Sept. 7. S. Evurtius.—Bollandists, Acta Sanctorum; Gallia Christiana, viii. 1410.

Sept. 8. Nativity of B. V. M.—See Benedict, xiv., De Festis, in Migne, Cursus Theol. complet, tom. xxvi.; Bossuet, vol. xi. pp. 64–129.

Sept. 14. Holy Cross Day.—Dict. Christ. Antiq., *s.v.* Cross.

Sept. 17. S. Lambert.—See Fleury, Hist. Eccles., book 41, § 16, etc.; Bollandists.

Sept. 26. S. Cyprian.—Contemporary Life by Pontius the Deacon; see Cave, Lives of the Fathers; Poole, Life of Cyprian (1840); Archbishop Benson's Cyprian.

Sept. 30. S. Jerome.—Life by Erasmus, prefixed to his edition of the Works; see Fremantle's introduction to S. Jerome in the English trans., Nicene and Ante-Nicene Library; Thierry, S. Jerome, 2 vols.; Largent, S. Jerome (1898).

Oct. 1. S. Remigius.—Acta by Hincmar of Rheims; S. Gregory of Tours.

Oct. 6. S. Faith.—Acta Sanctorum.

Oct. 9. S. Denys.—See Dict. Eccles. Biogr., *s.v.* Dionysius; and above all, the Bollandists, for an extremely interesting and able disentanglement of the various persons bearing this name.

Oct. 13. King Edward Confessor, Translation of.—See Luard's edition of the Lives of King Edward in the Rolls Series; Freeman, Norman Conquest, vol. ii.

Oct. 17. S. Etheldreda.—See Bede and the Chroniclers—Matthew of Westminster, William of Malmesbury, Thomas of Ely in Wharton's Anglia Sacra; Baronius, Annals; Modern accounts in Bright's Early English Church History; Bishop of Bristol's Theodore and Wilfrith; Montalembert, Monks of the West; Lingard, vol. i.; and Plummer's Notes to Bede, vol. ii. p. 235.

Oct. 25. S. Crispin.—See Tillemont, Memoires, vol. iv.

Nov. 6. S. Leonard.—Life published by the Bollandists; also Surius, Acts, vol. xi.

Nov. 11. S. Martin.—Life by his contemporary, Sulpicius Severus; Gregory of Tours; Nicene Library, Introduction to the translation of Hilary; A. M. Thierry, Histoire de la Gaule, vol. iii.; Montalembert, i. 212; Cazenove, S. Martin of T.

Nov. 13. S. Britius.—Dialogues of Sulpicius Severus, and Life of S. Martin; Gregory of Tours; Tillemont, vol. x. For the massacre of S. Brice's Day, 1006 A.D., see Hook, Archbishops, i. 462.

Nov. 16. S. Machutus.—See Surius, Lives of the Saints, vol. vi.; Lobineau, Vies des Saints de Bretagne, ii. 44; Dict. Eccles. Biogr., *s.v.* Maclovius.

Nov. 17. S. Hugh, Bishop of Lincoln.—See the Magna Vita in the Rolls Series (ed. by Dimock). Modern works—Vie de S. Hugues, par un Religieux de la Grande Chartreuse (1890); Perry, Hugh of Lincoln; Froude, Short Studies; Bramley, S. Hugh's Day at Lincoln, 1900.

Nov. 20. S. Edmund, King and Martyr.—Migne, Patrol. Lat., vol. 139; Life by Abbo of Fleury, written at S. Dunstan's request; Memorials of S. Edmund's Abbey, Rolls Series, 3 vols., ed. Arnold (1890). See also the Chroniclers—William of Malmesbury, Gesta Regum Anglorum, Matthew of Westminster. The legends are given with elaborate fulness in Mackinlay, Life of S. Edmund.

Nov. 22. S. Cæcilia.—See Dict. Eccles. Biogr. The legends will be found in Surius, Lives of the Saints, vol. vi.

Nov. 23. S. Clement.—See Bishop Lightfoot's edition of the Epistle.

Nov. 25. S. Catherine.—See Eusebius, H. E., viii. 14; Tillemont; Dict. Eccles. Biogr.

Dec. 6. S. Nicolas.—The Acts are in Surius, Lives of the Saints; see also Tillemont, vi.; Dict. Eccles. Biogr., Nicolaus (1).

Dec. 13. S. Lucy.—Tillemont, vol. v.; Surius, vol. xii. The story about her tearing out her own eyes is regarded as purely legendary; see Giry, Vie des Saints.

Dec. 31. S. Silvester, Bishop of Rome.—The life will be found in Surius, Lives of the Saints, vol. xii.

THE END

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